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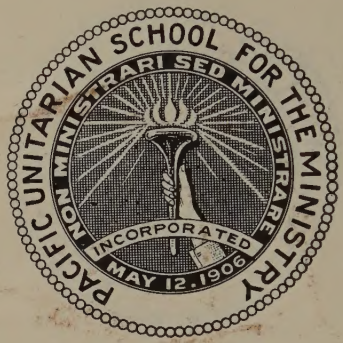

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

THE GIFT OF

HORACE DAVIS

OF SAN FRANCISCO

Hon. Horace Davis.

Dear Sir.

Your devotion to moral and educational advancement prompts me in the presentation of this volume, with the hope that it may be received as expressive of encouragement.

Very Respectfully,

The scribe of Cause.

Oct. 2nd 1889.

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BOOK I.

O, sacred Eloquence! forever moved
To broad and charactered beneficence
That breathes of Thee from every wondrous part
Of Thy fair book of Nature! If my soul,
The prime communication of Thy will,
Aspire without just aim or worthiness
To sing of Thee and reach intents sublime,
Do Thou deny me Thine aid requisite!
But, Inspiration, if through sympathy—
Through love of my poor fellow-beings I sing,
For brothers whom self-love perverts from Thee,
And Thou can'st deem me worthy of the task,
Do Thou, my Master, show me how to trace
Some faint resemblances of Thy designs!
Inspire this soul, acceptive though confined,
To tune its feeble song in unison
With Thy grand harmony of purposes;
And as the thoughtless sod or duller stone
Repeats the utterance of superior man,
Make me Thine echo, lowly but distinct;
Since even murmurs of a strain so grand,

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Though given back from finite intellect,
May call away from endless discords raised
The self-adorers of my family.
Those whose conceits, contending all in vain
To rank them sovereigns of the universe,
Bespeak creation purposeless, unplanned;
And view not Justice, Love and Wisdom couched
In aught that makes them conscious: who pretend
That matter is omnipotent, though ruled
By laws whose source, above their searching power,
Doth so belittle them they own it not.
Teach me to read from nature's ample page
Some truths, my Author, Thou hast fixed thereon!
And those who are so generous to believe
In things impossible to clay ascribed;
Who bow to nihilistic theories,
Which claim more marvelous and conceding faith
Than Thy most deep but motived mysteries,
May turn to learn the Cause of their own being;
Which traced soe'er through changes infinite
Must lead at last to birthless Origin,
Sole Evidence opposed to nothingness!—
Say, generous Inspiration, what of need
Preceded all creation and what thence,
For on Thy deigning Influence I wait.

God—as Existence in Eternity
Was, universal Life, the Mind of Being,

Receiving blissful interest from all
Summed in the Trinal Unity, replete
And in all infinite; hence ever blest
And grateful to eternal consonance.
For God, being Justice, Love and Wisdom, wed
In Persons three endured uncreable,
Being the primordial Union of all good—
Infinite Wisdom doth behold all power,
And measureth all truth, establishing
The faultless sight of Justice infinite,
Its power the force eternal Love directs;
And Love divine, the Principle of joy,
Beameth but charity and mercy forth;
Whose bliss is the great minister of Justice,
And benefice the plan of Wisdom's work.
Chaste Justice doth insure eternal right,
And is the Haven of all perfect peace,
Whose verdict pure is Wisdom's inspiration;
Whose state serene is Love's determinant.
Thus in close unity inseparable
Each furthering Either is found consummate:
And One being infinite doth equal all
By virtue unsurpassable thereof
As co-involved in attributes entire.

Though Justice, Love and Wisdom are distinct
By emanance of impulse Personal,
Yet are They of and in one Spirit whole,
Which is perfection's sum—Omnipotence.

So Justice vests the Father, and is God
In being of Him, Who beareth right and peace,
And Love is called the Son, and Love is God
In being of Him, Whose joy is charity;
And Wisdom, named the Holy Ghost, is God
In being of Him, Who hath all power and truth.
Therefore is God all-mighty and all-good,
Since naught is wanting in the Trinity
That was or is or e'er may be divine.—
Who hath found peace like that which Justice gave?
Who hath met joy like that which Love infused?
Who hath seen power like that which Wisdom taught?
And yet man hath of these but rays from God!
Which, though they be but bright refractions given
In wise amounts to minds as men are born,
They yet are infinite, like Him of Whom
They are a part pervading nature through.
He that gives Justice to his fellow-man,
And, mark, this Love and Wisdom both dictate,
Doth ne'er impoverish his sense of right
But hath received more blessing from the course,
In consciousness of having paid his debt,
Than is enjoyed by the recipient.
The heart from which pure Love pours forth, to bless
Some object worthy of the heavenly tide,
Feeleth itself a fountain still as full
To lavish forth in measure infinite.
And Justice prompteth on this blessed flood
While Wisdom heraldeth its benefit.

The mind that brings to poorer souls its store
Of Wisdom, though it giveth all possessed,
Doth still retain entire its wealth divine.
And ever gains increase of treasure so.
Love hath not moved man to more generous grant,
Nor Justice qualified more noble act.
Thus, even what radiates from God to man,
Is infinite and pure, because of Him.—

Forever beaming through eternity,
Engaged in grand conception, God surveyed
The endless possibilities of being,
Ere Justice thus considering portrayed:
I, Who am Justice, would increase return
Of glory intimate and consequent,
While goodness cherisheth anterior claims
From special value resident in right,
Seeking just objects to extend unto
And magnify prime efficacy through.
Whereat eternal Love looked forth response:
I, Who am Love, according would behold
New joy of glory waiting on the Word,
Concerning which decrees are relative.
Beholding Wisdom beamed in answer thus:
As by the Word which is the Unity
Such glory adequate must come as may
Be separate from yet worthy of Concern,
Those, yet to exist, shall each be given free will
And be resplendent in their consciousness

Equal to aught they may at first behold.
And Justice feeling answered : Those to come,
Called forth from nothing, shall of self be naught
And worthy of no blessings when advanced,
But ever owe a debt of gratitude,
Whose payment, being just, shall merit more—
Forever more Love's infinite consignments.
Love ardent with reply again was moved :
That they, who are not, may when called to being
Immediate know their duty paramount,
Be there prepared for them eternal joys
To enrapture, and to illustrate that Power
And Love and Truth doth court them ; which, as well,
Presents a channel generous through which
Divine endowments may go forth with them
To new and infinite developments ;
And those that shall be worthy will at last
Behold the sovereign grandeur of their Source.
And Wisdom mirrored in reflection thus :
The voluntary praises which shall come
From beings feeling equal unto God,
Will in true moral value constitute
The glory paid by peers of Deity ;
For measuring their gracious qualities
Equal to what of Heaven is known to them,
They shall seem gods to self, and thus to yield
Their interest full through gratitude alone,
Will make them meritorious of the Light,
As they too will of glory be creators

Not by the Word but by their will called forth.
My Love is with the foreseen host whose fall
And separation from the Realm of Peace
Must give them ever torment terrible;
But knoweth who self-willed bear what should not be,
With such creations must be banished hence.
My Justice, for their base ingratitude,
Observes that they eternally contrast
With Heaven's great joys, the offspring of their will;
The evil, woe and government of which
Must fall to them persistent in such ill,
As glory shall redound to faithful ones.
My Wisdom hath perceived it vain to call
To being only those whose gratitude
Delights Discernment from futurity,
Since such arranging would involve control
In foresight questionable of design
As homage Fate-suborned through compromise
And not what Justice owns, which must be free,
Not bound, fixed or selected by the Will.
Glory secured by such discrimination
Would be but prestige consequent upon
Divinity, and would be only like
Respect of creatures made enforced to praise,
Through its directed certainty, and this
Were only homage risen from out Power,
Or prepossessed, reposing in the Will—
Not given to but through Godhead brought about.
The incentive Potence of creative zeal

Containeth the requirement, that free-will
Be left to all without anticipation,
So glory may inspirit God-like beings,
Whose acts spontaneous will repay for gifts
Advanced by Love ere yet deserved or earned,
Which Justice must behold acquired by right:
Since not a thing to nothing can belong,
All must be won by innate increment.
Thus, also, through their fitness to receive
Will they subserve fair radiant mediums
For divine Inclination to extend
Grand attributes, and as retainers bright,
Develop by distributive acquirement
All reflex glories of their Principle.—
Hereat, the Word was moved, and instantly
Unnumbered hosts of beings beautiful
Beamed conscious, answering the Will of God;
So gifted and exalted that they seemed
To one another equal even to Him
Of Whose great sovereign qualities they then,
Not yet deserving, could but know a part;
Still, with full knowledge that to Him alone
Were they indebted for their being and all
That made their heavenly home of happiness.
Thus, sense of fealty at once appealed
For gratitude commensurate, presumed
Subordination of their rank and aims
Enlarged through primal disability.

First, the delight their consciousness bestowed
By intimate communion with their God,
Wooed forth deep gratitude which won again
A bounteous advance proportionate
Of Love's own attributes—a grace consigned
To court them onward to eternal Wealth.
So all these bright assembled myriads
Existed but by Wisdom of the Lord
With freedom as their legacy divine,
Through which to earn just title to His gifts,
Initiate duty pleading from the first.
It would have been unjust to deify
Impotent instruments fore-ruled to course—
Beings who could of self no good invite,
Even might creation thus wake negatives.
But Wisdom moveth not in vain, and so
Bestowed all freedom. Though by this was given
Creative power, with which they might beget
And, self-willed, bring into existence sin,
Against the Will of Heaven; still by this power,
And only by it, could they all create
That glory which God's blessed bounty claimed,
And made their being with Justice possible.
To be the associate of heaven's King
And such deservedly, each one was given
That through which semblance could alone be wrought.
For by free gratitude could they secure
Their right to existence and advancement bright,
Becoming thus, in truth, their own creators,
And fit associates of God as such.

Through Heaven's unbounded sphere all endless joys
Enchanting and enriching courted them :
Joys of that quality which never tire
But ever leave unsurfeited the spirit,
Sustaining thus desire and constant bliss :—
Like kindred gifts that God impartial sends
To man, and which can never surfeit him
Nor satiate his soul's great longing for—
As draughts of Wisdom, which, however copious,
But tone the strengthened sense with thirst for more ;
As Poesy, which follows Wisdom's smile,
Enhancing each ideal shone upon.
As Love, which, while it floods the soul with bliss,
Leaves still its vacant yearning unappeased ;
Or faith, the breath of Love, too nourishing
And needful to the soul to weary it.
As Justice, which, though always more advanced,
Doth never find man without need for more
Or courage, Justice-born, though moral might,
Yet must increased protect dependent spirit.
Joys like to these, enrapturing beyond,
By their clear freedom from all gross designs,
Instead of whose impairing influence
Is God's pure Presence emanant with grace,
Diversify through Paradise for them,
Transporting, blessing and encouraging
Their very duty in its exercise.

The blisses of the blest may be compared

To harps whose myriad strings responsive swell
And roll rejoicings of a thousand notes
In one grand accord, with such harmony
Celestial happiness is unified.
Never encompassed, endless, limitless,
These joys of spirit prove affinities
One to the other, each of single worth
Yet all at once enjoyed: as concert strains,
Whose parts divided would delight the sense,
But simultaneous heard enrapture it.
Some may be likened to the soul's great joy
While in its earthly mantle of the flesh,
When o'er it dawn the rays of some new truth
Unlooked for, hence more pleasing as it brightens.
Joys of acquirement such as these extend
In sacred beams from God to those in heaven,
As beautiful and constant as their Source;
But in amount enjoyed as merited—
Just values being observed but by advance.
Others, the ecstasies of consciousness,
Surpass the gladness of the soul when blest
With knowledge that it holds the love of all
Who righteously encourage it in good;
Or souls companioned in their jonrney here
By their own offspring virtues, which unseen
Are nursed and strengthened for the love they claim,
And for the peace and comfort they impart.
Others again, the pleasures of creation,
Derived from glories they originate,

Move with a loftier and more holy zeal
The spirit's glad advancement in the Will,
Than themes most grand can bring to poet breasts,
Or fairest forms incite earth's artists with.
And deeper still than mother-love's fond joy
When strength and beauty bless the virtuous young
Is the full rapture of the spirit there
To find its glories pleasing all, even God—
While mother-love must war a thousand fears
Of separation, ills and omens here,
The spiritual issue of the blest,
Developing forever, throng to grace
In unity secure their authors bright;
And every augmentation blesses more
Its pure creator, than the noblest work
That genius sees advance beneath its touch
Toward proportions of sublimity.

As though in fine community regaled
At once the brightest sons of every age —
The grandest heroes earth has proudly borne;
The ripest sages that have learned her ways;
The warmest poets, they that moved the most—
And every virtuous monarch of the mind,
Associating with unenvied peers,
Caught from their offerings at the shrine of truth
The inspiring flame, that ever grew in power,
And blessed alike its brilliant witnesses
And its projectors—as their grand delight

In mutual entertainment to compete;
So the bright spirits by associate zeal
Inspired and edified progress in bliss
With each new offering at the throne of God.
But far above man's recompense is theirs,
Albeit who sacrifice their acts to Truth
Obtain return the most benign on earth,
Still those who commune with Divinity
Enjoy as much a greater benefit
As their assemblage is than man's select.
The sire's domain, whose worthy progeny
Strive each in excellence to please him most,
Yet through paternal and fraternal love
Rejoice if either of their number pass
The rest in duty's race, since more it serves
To increase his pleasure—their complete desire—
Presents a partial picture of the sphere
Wherein the eternal Patriarch is blessed.
As, oft on earth, a generous king of wealth
Invites about him numbers of his friends,
To lavish what he giving best enjoys
In their marked pleasure, gratitude, and good;
And as his kindly ways enable them
To appear more gracious and attach new force
To their returns of wisdom and of wit,
So heaven's Host extends to His fair guests
The priceless bounties of Omnipotence;
Pleased most at their advance and happiness
That aids ennobled gratitude to soar.

The weary traveler of life looks back
O'er memory's vista upon scenes endeared
Regretful that no step can be retraced,
No slighted opportunity retrieved.
And though hope's borrowed beams pour kindest light
Along the darkened prospect yet untrod,
There lurk those shadows that we name the fears,
To pain the timid spirit constantly.
But the pure, radiant resident of Heaven
Reviews its grand acquirements' long array
Impressed with pleasure at each period,
Howe'er remote, distinct, and satisfied;
Unpained by enviousness in being surpassed,
Filled with a peace as of Philosophy—
Pleased in God's pleasure, blessed in blessing Him.
And if there be a more exalting bliss
For those whom Wisdom deigns the future to,
It is anticipation, glad and clear,
Of sacred benefices waiting them,
Whose glories beaming dawn-like ere they rise
To dazzle with their brightness, qualify
The enraptured for their adequate delight.
No cloud of doubt o'ershadowing interferes
With their resplendent day of happiness
For, unlike earthly life's uncertainties,
Their aims directed to the Infallible,
Of full attainment certain are assured.

To illustrate the endless joys of Heaven,

Or classify them, would exceed the task
Of drawing every creature animate
From things infinitesimal to huge;
Of naming every orb that leads the eye
In humble homage to its Architect;
Of picturing all the vegetal display
In forms and gentle shades of coloring:
For when all nature's quantities and charms
And forces were considered and described,
They might be made resemble but as shades
Some few beatitudes of Paradise. —

Not all alike did Heaven's children mount
To grades of eminence, but various
And different their ways and gains, because
Unbiased, free and individual.
Some sought their duty and its happiness
In panegyrics on their Maker's gifts;
Some felt most gratitude in homage fond,
In calm and unobtrusive adoration;
And some found glory in exhibiting
The ethereal fruits His bounty charged them with.
As from a common parent-earth the shrubs
Rear differing plumes, or trees yield diverse sweets,
So the angelic multitudes displayed
Dissimilar tributes to their Nourisher.
And when the brighter and more beautiful
Among them were beheld by those less high,
They beamed as signals of encouragement

And aids magnificent of His designs.
Those ranged in glory round like diadems
About the sacred Presence, regalized
As crowns and coronets illumining
With ever growing brilliancy their King;
And those on whom His graces shone arrayed,
While this great prominence exalted, served
As living thrones a designation grand.
As spirit realms were those in whom reposed
Politic or evolved His attributes;
Dispensers of their orders and effects
And metaphysical establishments.
Nor were the modest dilatory ones
Less entertaining than the rest in Heaven;
For as simplicity in childhood wins
The wisest by suggestive wistfulness,
So the elect with interest of Love
Observed their co-heirs' diffidence and aims
Charmed by the promise of their triumphs passed.

And thus it was in Heaven when one—who moved
As morning's star above the glowing train
That from the orient bear reflected light—
Effulgent most with God's transcendent beams,
High Beelzebub, the Lucifer endowed,
Conceived and nourished sin perfidious.
Long foremost in his gratitude to Him
Whose sacred blessings he had glorified
With warmer zeal than those associate

And so advanced proportionately more,
Beholding none his equal but the One
Whom all paid gratitude and ranked supreme,
He first lost pleasure in observing this,
And thence begot the false sprite Selfishness.
Oh, had this monstrous issue, even at birth,
Been sacrificed to Love as to atone
For an existence spurious but short!
Or had the willful author been alone
The victim of its sad rapacity!
Alas, like fire that warmeth at approach,
But blindeth glaring on the promised prey,
And spreadeth on destruction of all things,
This woeful spirit, Selfishness, allured
With treacherous heat and light illusory
A legion of ungrateful from their God.—
Grim Curse!—Fomenter for all time to come
Of every evil, woe and turbulence—
Fell monarch of all misery—thy reign
Begun o'er spirits blest, does not forbear
To impose its tyranny on captive souls
Found weighted in their fettering of clay!
Thou kindler of the conflagration fierce
That spares no property of soul or sense!
Thy fiery breath hath blighted the fair flower
Of friendship—seared its germ from blossoming earth.
Thy vapors of destruction spread about
Have stifled equity and poisoned trust—
The legislator from thy blaze turns blind,

The ruler cannot see the populace—
The parent in thy heat destroys the child,
And man at war turns thief and murderer!
Thy baneful distillations may be found
In anger, bigotry, lust, tyranny,
In abject law, in gross intemperance,
In titles, classes, heresies, deceits,
In mad ambition or in lazy ease.
What though thy names and means are various
As envy, greed, sloth, vengeance, vanity;
Thy insidious element infuses all!
Thou art sole generator of all ill—
The prime defection whence disorder springs,
No crime, omission or remorse results
But as thy near or distant consequence!

While the first traitor, rising in the scale
Of spiritual grandeur, realized
With wonder the great goodness of his God,
Whose Wisdom swayed unfathomed, and whose Love
Seemed ever urging as for privilege
To increase deservedly advancing grace,
The spirit, pregnant with his selfish pride,
Delayed, perhaps, through craft, the birth of sin.
For, unlike twain material natures ruled,
The spiritual entity alone
May bear, unaided, offspring good or bad.
And hence none knew except Divinity
The foul gestation of that evil seed.

As some, whose powers electrify the world,
Avoid in contemplation of themselves
The conscious gratitude they owe to Him
Of whom they might be gifted instruments,
And dream themselves creators even of Traits
That are eternal and transmissible;
So Beelzebub, the soaring Lucifer,
Lost in proud meditation on his gifts,
Forgetting gratitude, in error groped,
And judged the travailed imp a greater type
Of Wisdom—that Idea infinite
No creature can essay or add unto,
Continuing derivable to all,
Ever creative, but uncreable—
The universal Spring whence beings may draw,
Yet not contribute to, but utilize;
The same as holy Love and Justice chaste,
Whom all derive from laws observable,
Yet none increase though thus conditions form.—
Because this falling soul of light had power
To vivify the notion of his pride
Conceit claimed principle, by self-love raised,
And since God interposed no powers save those
Beneficent—His only attributes—
These all ignored in false enthusiasm,
Repudiating further gratitude,
The erring Lucifer discovered not
To traitorous ambition any check;
And even began to doubt the unity

That simplified the Persons in control.
Although observing oft how Justice ruled
Infallible through Wisdom in the course
Of judgments Love extended o'er benign,
Seeing that Wisdom sought in measurement
The ends of Justice, the behests of Love;
While Love's beneficence in manner told
What Justice held and Wisdom recognized;
Although he knew that Justice reigned implied
In Wisdom and in Love co-consummate,
One, unified by Traits Omnipotent;—
As in an individual state are met
Three perfect organisms distinct, supreme,
But each drawing permeant functions from the whole;
So Justice, the divine judiciary
On Wisdom's legislation, moveth still
What Love executive inspiriteth—
Yet did vain Lucifer, the willful doubt,
And vision to himself supremacy,
Known only in Omniety, Who thus
Thereon through Love soliloquized:
Sin breeds—
Portentous to seduce from happiness
Vast numbers to Solicitude endeared.
And Justice joining:
Though a host may fall,
Ungrateful after all that Heaven hath taught,
By Love bestowed and Wisdom framed, their sin
Will so revolt against all things divine,

As to debase their being to worthlessness,
Whose self-effected banishment and woe
Will be too alien even for chaste concern.
And Wisdom following :
All have been given
A freedom irrevocable as just;
And whosoever is deceived at first
Shall become conscious of it ere too late.
Thence, those whom willful pride maintains in wrong
From bliss will sacrifice themselves to woe—
Proud subjects obstinate of evil power !
Yet aught arising from without the Word
Must serve an instrument of final good.
So shall this prove a crucible of worth,
A lasting test of Heaven's fidelity—
Albeit that spirit, Greed, shall hence be known
As Satan—adversary foul, forsooth,
Its very temptings will be so allowed
Their limitations may attest the true
And further prompt with glorious enterprise.

Thus pondered the Creator, ere in Heaven
Appeared the coming tempter, Selfishness ;
Destined to wile from Wisdom myriads
Weak and unworthy of their heavenly state.
But while the laboring Lucifer matured
This spiritual burden impious,
With high attainments fit for nobler use,
While quickening this adversary low

To assume the semblance if not dignity
Of Heaven's peerage, as a gifted power,
The author fell its victim at the start:
For with the pride of daring to disown
That prime dependence upon Providence
There came the vanity that glory's hosts
Would owe to this vile issue of his sin
Their freedom from all duty due to God,
And an imagined exaltation sprung
From energies that Satan would arouse.
The vision of all beings, but the One
Whom Lucifer no longer cared to please,
Returning praise eternal and renown
For their conceived emancipation, rose
So heightened in pregustant policy,
That Heaven's Monarch, to this spirit blind,
Appeared a subject to commiserate—
A Being deserted by the multitude,
Whose future tribute would be only scorn.
If fear—prenatal qualm of sin—annoyed
At intervals this contemplation wild,
Fear that ingratitude so infamous
Would shock all heaven when first disclosed or known,
The demon Selfishness developing,
Had so possessed its parent spirit now
The thought was soon expelled. Its influence
So powerful had become that not a touch
Of shame for plotted perfidy was felt—
Nay, such was viewed as virtuous interest

To work the general welfare and subserve
The questioned good of One to that of all.

Deceitful arrogance! it needed but
An effort of reflection to convince
How false this fantasy of Satan was!
No moral monitor is ever heard,
But flattering error listened to instead,
When Selfishness usurps the rule of mind
And wrests from Reason its authority!—
So shameless is the sophistry of self
With pompous lies to justify its wrong,
That vice is misnamed virtue and extolled,
And virtue for opposing it condemned.

Oh, were it not for Heaven's economy,
In Love compassionate and Wisdom deep
As Justice confident, such spurious pride
Had met immediate banishment and shame!
But that the threat of hosts then innocent
But fallible begetting sin the same
Far in the future of eternity,
Made more expedient present trial of worth
Whose proofs through ordeal would be final found
On field of glory gracious for the just.

Yet had vain Lucifer the power to bear
A spirit qualified to supersede
The powers of grace distributed to those

Least eminent among the galaxy ;
Or fiend whose influence might mock the bliss
Of those to whom maintenance reached from God,
Such evil could have scarcely been conceived
So swift its banishment from light had come !
But the base Satan in prospective, lacked
Ability to long deceive itself
Much less creations of diviner mold ;
And though its policy would end the peace
Of all who joined that army traitorous
Their beings devoted to its impious course
Would be the only ones disturbed through heaven.
Indeed, their obduracy furnished chance
For faithful joy and merit in the Cause,
To war His truths against perdition's lies
And free their numbers from unworthiness.

Like many mortals since seduced to espouse
Some liar's interest believed their own,
Who in fealty to falsehood give up life ;
Or if enlightened ere the sacrifice,
Persist in error sooner than submit
To that humility their wrong compels,
Holding at enmity all truths or pleas
That lower their valuations counterfeit ;
As these, earth's willful slaves of Selfishness,
Burden and crush themselves with miseries,
Their vain aim proving its own vanity,
Their greed defeating its rash promises ;

So thousands, though exalted with the Word,
Through suicidal infamy obdured
Would suffer victims of their stubborn will,
The rather than admit condition mean.

Enslaved already Lucifer preferred
To render to his creature that esteem
And gratitude, for hopes it waked within,
Owed the Creator for possessions swerved:
And thus all qualities left possible
For evil transmutation to his pride,
And even mockeries of the Attributes
Developed the unholy spirit nursed.
Until its advent imminent unloosed
The massed monstrosity—a living lie.
For even while confident of great success,
Proud Lucifer knew well it needed guile
To meet comparison with loftier life;
Since on its conflict of apparent worth
And freedom's inclination rested all.
Thus, while the blest inhabitants of Heaven
As numerous in methods as degrees,
In honest gratitude ambition found
To rise with various zeal and grace deserved,
The restless spirit Selfishness appeared
Amid their number, noted not at first.
But soon by flattery that wins the weak,
By guile which needs accessory in will,
Making each prey self-executioner,

The wily Satan hosts unworthy sought,
And sowed with lies wherever pride might yield.

Unwary of deception, then unknown,
Some looked upon the stranger's visionings
As essays weak of humor and strange wit;
Such pleasantry as joins comparisons
Lurking where little things burlesque the great,
Or look disjointed from absurdity,
Or moral hide beneath a mask of mirth.
The most exalted shared in this belief,
Observing Lucifer, whose constant light
Beamed in attendance on his worshiped sprite.
Often, as herdsmen lead the older beast
With ease where'er they choose to take its young,
The joyful would engage in likely scheme
To mark high Lucifer's precipitance;
Which was esteemed, with certain eulogisms,
The grandest exercise of farcial power.

But, though at first believed a bright conceit
To answer Heaven's diversity of gifts—
A new and glad idea of this great light
To be original as glorious—
Ere long the peers conspicuous beheld
In Lucifer an awful earnestness,
Whose growing interest, not for God as once,
But for this restless issue of his own,
Waked wonder and attention curious.

For one so gifted to extol and serve
A creature others paid no tribute to,
Was not unnoticed by the most recluse.
Nor was the novelty alike construed ;
Some deeming Lucifer embarked upon
The power of will toward the Infinite
To fathom freedom's possibilities—
An effort judged in problem most profound.
Some guessed the object might resolve to show
How error may obtain the meed of right,
And be effective by the contrast drawn
To prove the inerrability of Truth.
But many, even among the highest, found
The influence of example new but strong,
Admitting to their beings stranger thought.
Example—current bending as the wind,
That bias weakness takes to good or bad,
Swayed many to conjecture and surmise,
Contending as to what the theories
Of gratifying Selfishness might bring.
What if creating, the Omnipotent
Neglected to inspire ambition great
Because it tended toward rivalry
Or general estrangement consequent ?
Then if Heaven's harmony compelled the gifts
They all enjoyed, and that of freedom, choice,
What ground had gratitude to levy on
Eternal duty for receipts of need ?
What if each individuality

Assumed its own development apart
From Him assisting such as now obtained,
Could He discountenance such enterprise—
Such glory raised to self—sole architect?
Might not all venerate, and God as well,
Though thus ignored, this independent zeal,
This courage to depend upon oneself
And owe no tribute to a greater One?
To these, and like pernicious heresies,
The vain instinctive gave a violent strength:
The immoral flame of Selfishness once spread
Was quickened by the ardors it destroyed!
And multitudes turned traitorous from God,
Consoled by vanities the future lured,
For loss of gracious peace already missed.

While conscience, sleepless sentinel that warns
The spirit of surprise, disputed right
At every lie's insidious approach,
Protesting where invited danger frowned,
Pained by the welcomed evil it inveighed,
Unheeded, many held as cowardice,
Or fear which Might suspicious servile made,
This faithful sensibility alert.
The doomed looked on the lead of Lucifer,
Whose bold and strange departure they admired,
As plea to ratify their doubtful course:
The hedge of error—pretext desperate
That claims immunity through precedent;

The mitigation villainy most bold
For craven following establishes.
The dubious numbers deeming tolerance
And God's forbearance a necessity,
Presumed the schism's eventual success ;
When, like the unprincipled of ages since
Whose judgments borne by currents popular
Have flocked to simulate the common way,
These beings hastened with the tendency
Dependent wholly on such subterfuge,
And, lest they lose by differing from the lot,
Flaunted pretension in conviction's stead.
Not like believers did they advance deceit ;
For lacking knowledge of the fallacies
They missed the recreant fervor of their force ;
Proposing points the subjects aimed not at,
Ascribing things extraneous and unclaimed.
Like earthly adulators from whose wits
Opinions novel float but with the drift :—
Their minds too indolent to traverse fair
In search where merit may be obvious,
They fashion generalities absurd
And laud where value is invisible.

All Heaven was soon familiar with the views
Reflected by each spirit : for unlike
The strait of matter for exchange of thought,
Untrammeled spirit radiates afar
With ideas manifest on all it meets.

So mingling in their lucid consciousness,
The faithful myriads, loyal still to Love,
With holy earnestness besought to save
Their doubtful co-heirs from iniquity:
And as each truant from Essential grace
Discovered something false in Satan's plot,
There was increasing joy among the just
Even for the promise such awakening brought.

While numbers humbled by their great mistake,
Pleased with renewing allegiance to the Lord,
Endured humiliation they begot,—
More, heedless or presumptuous of themselves,
Remained reliant on their own resource
For vague distinctions summoned but too soon,
Proud of the very guilt degrading them.
However, Justice contemplated calm
That punishment the rash were bent upon,
As Wisdom granted countless aids of Love
To challenge inchoate sin and check deceit—
Invested champions of the Holiest,
Charged to exonerate Heaven from all wrong.

BOOK II.

What strength devotion gives the million souls
That early haste to labor; not for self,
But urged by claims of Justice and of Love:
Duty, that moves the noble of mankind
In the tremendous army going forth
To battle daily—though unheralded
For constant chivalry toward the weak.
Or this, or that which principle supports,
Quiet heroisms, marked in every field,
Are forces which material foes o'erlook,
But find the masters of mechanic powers.
To read a nation's or religion's doom,
Discern where duty from the masses dies;
And surely as the element of life
Deserts the carnal victim of decay,
Such social or religious scheme must fail,
Its soulless prestige wasting slow away.
In vain are engines and their energies,
Vain as the rock-hewn fortress to resist,
Or art or science to supply or quell
The might that in a moral sense abides.
Despite the cynic's sneer, or dunce's doubt,—
For dunces dare on philosophic ground,—
Though zealots physical would feel or weigh

All properties or figure them as naught,
Though theorists, to help peculiar themes,
Dissect, distort and classify to suit,
Yet most of earth still subject to the sway
Of duty, prove its gravity supreme.
No hero's happiness, though, ever matched,
Nor faith endowed with so much earnestness,
Nor confidence presaged such fortitude,
As moved the faithful gathering above
Where Heaven's integrity was found involved.
Not any valor ever known on earth,
The grandest enterprise of patriots told,
The best adventure of discoverers,
Even what has trained the missionary foot
To mount o'er mountains of barbarities,
None yet have equaled the majestic means
And joys that joined seraphic gallantry.

When more and more the errors entertained
Deformed upon each spirit's scrutiny,
The weak annoyed—a consequent rebuke—
To gloom and reticence were mostly prone.
With these God's gracious emissaries thronged,
And, by assurances of sympathy,
Promptings of Love, and warm encouragement,
Prevailed on many to return to grace
And scorn humiliation. Thus the good.
But pride, the sense of Selfishness diffused,
Made the more willful ones at first avoid,

Then impudent ignore, till finally
The desperate lot contemned and ridiculed
These efforts made for their deliverance;
Assembling sullenly, remote, apart,
Save when impelled by envy to approach,
And taunt or criticise the reverent.

Such was the state when heaven's eternal Lord
Permitted as His champion spirit one,
Whom thence called Michael, ardent to lead on
The virtuous hosts to combat heresy;
Charged with what flaming light of Truth divine
As like a sword would penetrate and tell
All sinful opposition.
Thus the Will
Dawned on the grateful multitudes intent:
Know ye that in the Father, Justice reigns
'Midst Wisdom as the Perpetuity,
And Love the outward personating Source,
The Utterance conjoined, the actual Word,
Shall all acknowledge, only Son of God,
Ordained the full devolved Embodiment.
Hence, those ungrateful who from Love withhold,
Their last recourse from mercy separate,
To endure in woe of their own craft and choice.
Thine, Michael, be the exalted privilege
Of leading virtue's valiant spirits forth
To glorious war upon the dupes employed
With that foul issue, Selfishness, announced

The adversary, Satan, foe of right.
Lest in the future they presume to blame
Judicious Heaven for their destiny.

Now when the monarch of the sky withdraws,
Leaving a rich munition of his beams
To flush the empyrean, but imposing most
Upon that orb which lights along the rest,
It throbs amid the swelling train as though
Empowered beyond all others, to pursue
And banish every gloomy shade from night—
So the eternal Light ceased to dilate
Having bestowed meet purpose through the realm;
And so of Heaven's loyal beings equipped,
Their leader, Michael, with more beaming grace,
Led forth the diadems whose zeal increased,
Expanding at restraint—impetuous now
To prove their weapon truths against deceits
And scatter darkness with transcendent light;
Till Satan's farthest shadows were dispersed,
And all the kindred evil following;
Till Heaven prevailing over infamy
Would demonstrate its worth to worthiness.

Nor passed unnoticed this superior scene
By those whom evil had suspicion taught;
For scarce was Wisdom's congregation met,
Before sin's cohorts on the tempter turned
For means contingent following required.

No being, however bad, of God impressed,
Could flagrantly attempt another's wrong
Against that Will, though each its own opposed;
So all, even Lucifer, direction waived
To the prerogative of Satan base,
And spurious exemption rose to rule.
Thus men imbued with prejudice or vice,
Admire of all their culprit crowd, as chief,
One whose most absolute contempt of right
Obtains gross rank from their depravity;
Respect is wanting in the zest, withal,
Since only as their tool he pleases them;
Much as a cannon cheers some pirate band.
It is the weapon's work, not weight or mold,
That fills the weak with false encouragement.

Yet those intrigued, deserting Paradise
Eagerly swarmed in startled numbers now,
Confused, intractable and turbulent;
And was not Satan's mastery complete
Their madness had confounded as a plague.
Dissembling manner more astute and bold,
The evil one advanced illusion thus
Diffusing o'er the anxious intercourse:
Ye spirits bravest and most free! whom none,
Not even that presumptuous Source of good,
May prostrate to dependence pitiful!
Ye host of gods! for each itself alone
Doth value and enrich and grateful praise,

Claiming naught else save mutual regard
In the defense and furtherance of aims!
Behold what method shall these measures meet
When the advancing menials of Him
Who doth usurp existence, tombing all,
Dare such as we superior, who war
With the order hateful of anterior laws.
Prepare for struggle, but with easy trust;
Since not among their servile faculties
Is power to move a principle or claim
Sustained by independent sovereigns,
Whose fit alliance am I proud to lead,
And triumph therefore judge reliable.
My instigations will be shown to thwart
And mock these messengers impertinent,
So their lost enterprise may send them back
With a humility as yet unknown
To that vain Autocrat it pleases most.
At this ridiculous rant the godless gleamed
Such satisfaction as betrayed belief:
Alike the reckless riot listening
To some jocose, immodest demagogue,
And finding nothing of the force of truth,
Rejoice if only waggery succeed
So that their chuckling gives them confidence.
But short the vein was jocular with those
Who not in order learned how soon and far
Their bright opponents were to busy them;
As sweeping forward the celestial van

Already notified their task begun :
While, like the swiftness of the morning's rays,
But still more piercing and out-numbering,
There followed rapidly so vast a throng,
That could those suns that crowd the pearly path
Wheel suddenly entire reverse in space,
The brilliant area would but partly serve
The instance of that heraldry of Heaven.
Now was magnificence of contest hailed—
Now glories marvelous of power displayed—
The exalting triumphs of the hosts of Truth,
The proud affliction of sedition's hordes—
A status of sublimity beyond
Description's highest skill or measurement.
Even its great participants engrossed
And so essential in the grand result,
Were conscious only of contiguous things,
These merging every interest profound.
Throughout the realms disputing ranged afar
The warfare swift, aggressive and intense ;
But with the method true and well-disposed
Of Truth's wise legions in their orders led,
Against wild Satan's mass irregular,
Who but the desperation of defense maintained.
'Twas as the hurling of all planets forth
With governed force increasing as they neared
Whatever dark abysses ominous frowned
Deep in unlighted and retired expanse.

In Michael's multitudes illustrious
Were those ennobling leaderships whose names
Have given the loftiest tone to sacred song,
And whom according to diversity
Conducting their affinities of zeal
Seemed most auspicious to. As rise a class
More prosperous, when direction rests on one
Whose impulse is unanimous in all,
And aptness, thus reciprocal, enhanced.
The legion led by mighty Gabriel—
Impervious transports they of Wisdom's power—
Flashed onward each a thousand radiants,
Whose potence, those opposing found so keen,
That in confusion many turned as blind
From what well deemed had aided them in sight:
While others, stung with madness to observe
Their darkened virtues stripped, more desperate sought
With their gross shades to blot the heavenly flames,
And, as night's brooding creatures of the air
Annoyed by taper's or the sun's slant rays,
Circled in rage, but false, inaccurate
To reach or near the ardent founts of light.

Now, Gabriel, than whom no other held
More vigor of the Holy Spirit, showered
Such dreaded thunderbolts of Heaven abroad,
Not even a throng of those so weak in self
Seemed equal to engage God's mighty one.
But to make show of eminence once claimed,

A being not useful of the gifts reposed,
Named Belial thus, for risk of pride essayed,
Glaring before his wrathful blasphemies
Upon Truth's glorious enthusiast:
Thou meddling missioner! whence Gabriel,
Thy title, but through flattery of thy God?
Him thou art servile to, Who being of Power,
Lacks judgment more in hoping much from thee;
Even hadst thou all his stinted hoard assumed,
It would not fit thee for so wild an aim
As testing freedom's application here.
Thus now do I abridge thy vaunts of might!
And swift there sped this hideous sciolism,
Like many tongues of flame antagonized,
As calculated to confound at once
The virtuous spirit with despair and shame:
The Power, impersonate in Wisdom, sooth,
Feigns unity with Justice as with Love,
Yet brooks no limit nor superior.
Vain either terms or boasts, or Power may rule
Supremest in that jarring Trinity;—
So seems it now, for Justice must forbid
This most officious insult to the free,
Who but submit to and exert the which
Doth in thy Model of perfection reign.—
Or grows thy Tyrant fearful of like points?
The blast expired; but God defensed so well
His chosen long before the encounter came
Against invective horrors that direct

As such foul vaporings in heat advanced,
Were they dissolved as nothing or reversed
Distempered from the glow round Gabriel flung;
Who thus upon the wretched Belial
Truth's rays immutable astounding glanced :
Poor phantom ! rash and resolute in sin,
Hast thou withdrawn thyself from every good
And yet dare question duty its deserts ?
Thou knowest that praise is never in excess
However broadened for virtuous exercise,
But is encouragement of purpose just ;
While flattery fawneth unto things possessed
Whose fair utility alone moves Heaven.
To all extends the grace most liberal
That every growth may show its signal fruit,
Though none control that Sun's impartial force,
Which lit thy freedom for a wiser end
Than bursting with the very woes conceived.
Behold ! this back I send thee in return
For that absurdity thy hatred hurled.
At once as like a marvelous globe of light
Flew forward opening and enclosed about
The astonished Belial a sphere of Truth
Which mirrored inward every evil held
Upon their hopeless author prisoned so,
Yet beamed still influenced by Gabriel thus :
Power hath no personage in any being,
But takes from various states its entity,
Or good or bad as they approach or leave

Heaven's Unity—infallibly comprised.
For will to wisely boast the trait of power
Requires it be not such as wastes itself.
Motives must therefore harmonize that tend
With God's great attribute to coincide—
That potent Will which knits the Trinity,
As one who vainly strives to turn some law
To scorn in nature, learns in terror late
The misery his madness on him brings ;
If with the woe which no escape allows
He chafes beholding order not disturbed
Either at folly or its consequence ;
So Belial, whose wretchedness it was
To crouch 'mid evils of his own device,
But worse, to witness Heaven's august power
The same for all the silly throes of hate—
Oh, this it was that pained the vain one most—
His rancor turned to insignificance.
The proud, though mourning now their ally's plight,
Dispersed precipitate from Gabriel,
Who, like a hero just, gave praise to Him
Whose aim is happiness—whose grace is strength—
Whose war is prelude to all victories.

The ignoble Satan, who had passed exempt
Among the lists of loftier origin,
In every meanness apt and diligent,
To heat with hatred or exalt with lies
The failing forces in disorder's maze,

Was first confronted by God's servant true,
Abdiel, who prized the humblest privilege
In service of the Master glorified.
How sought the subtle to elude the just—
How crafty wrong, but right how vigilant!
When humbling imposition failed to tempt
With worthier match the angel resolute,
Or when the claims—assurance paramount—
Of treason's sole direction too were scorned,
The imp denounced unjust the address of one
Dispatched from God; making the craven plea,
That since from Him no grace of being came,
Its holdings and pursuits should be aloof,
Free from all inquisitious and restraints,
If Heaven with fairness should be dignified.
At last the only turn to fierceness left
Was in the huge contortion it assumed,
Its fuming spirit hydra-like spread out
Among the sinful in connection webbed,
That Abdiel might as futile deem desire
To enfeeble such a many-membered foe,
If not find terror in the monstrous phase.
But to distort or cringe alike were vain
Before the faithful challenger, who thus
The spurious Satan by dissection rent:
Impostor! hope not, though of guilt the lord,
To alter or escape my purpose keen!
However low thy fawning, yet as far
From saving as degrading thee it proves.

That trust protested with sin's impudence
Were rash for thee could Justice be enraged;
But Heaven's dignity will never bend
To petty vengeance or depraved affront;
Deigning but laws which even to boldness lift
The weakest on their tolerance encroached—
Laws, that so loom above thy base conceits
Thou'rt flattered by existing in their light,
And from thy depth raised mad with insolence.
Receive what now of Truth I burn to force
Forever on thee in thy snares accursed!
Immediate as magic turns the sight
Was Satan horrified, beholding all
The selfish netted still but hostile each
Of others' interest, so that noxious spleen
Back to the center coursed from whence it came,
Its devilish fomenter anguishing
From every side: as virus from the heart
Sent out through many a vein to pain all parts,
Whose angry force returns the malady
On the foul fountain bursting with distress.
So bound to antagonists, fierce victims made,
By instinct one in circulating woe,
The writhing foe was scorned by Abdiel,
Who followed nobly the advance of Truth.

How often since, infusing earth's poor souls,
The same demoniac Selfishness has wound
The hidden arteries of hate and strife,

Through which has poured the secret curse of each,
Exchanged with venom, only more increased.
Yet in the tangle all their virulence
Is turned at length against the fiend possessed,
The captor as the captive suffering.
Oh, when thus mad they give their talents point
To wield and sting all members in the toil,
No hope survives the vengeance of the feud,
No good but what unheeding they effect
When wrangling wrong distraught gives place to right.

Among majestic powers Ithuriel soared,
The fair discovery of God endowed,
Glittering with graces mystical and clear:
Nor aim nor pretense could evade the view
Of this calm spirit steadfast bent thereon.
While leading thousands in vocation peers,
They, venerating Wisdom's confidence,
Rejoiced to emulate the gifted one—
A meritorious honor, for such worth
Was shown through all adventures that in this
The vain instinctive vanished at approach
Of the great luminary's searching gleams;
As vapors that to darken dawn obtrude
But from the sun's first glances fade away.
Numbers there were emboldened, though, with pride,
Who braved ambitious the encounter high;
In misery and remorse repenting soon.
Spurned by all witnesses—even by themselves—

So worthless through the exposure they appeared.
False Asmodeus, the destroyer dark,
Who in vain appearances a monarch towered,
Had long arranged deep methods to defy
All arguments and measures of the just;
Presuming none might penetrate the depth
Of cunning infamy prepared so well
But, humbled and abashed, desert their plans.
Blind judgment !—as if Providence withheld
Whatever future exigence required,
Or left His dutiful to doubt or chance.
Forth sallying from the midst of error's mass,
The inflated spectre left a void behind
Whose boundary profound attention held,
And pompous through their admiration moved
To meet austere Ithuriel midway.—
When lordly mimic with vain lineage plumed,
To fend established rules of roguery,
Faces a foe superior in truth,
From lofty arrogance stoops he to lies,
Defaming best reform with epithet ;—
His feigned contempt as low of what is high,
His scouts to make an outrage of a right,
Suggest what manner Asmodeus forced,
Thus trying the patient mien of probity :
Exponent stern, but vague ! what good impels
Discourteous thy designs inquisitive,
Where uninvited, unesteemed thou com'st
To trifle in dissension ? Me behold,

A barrier to thy progress, fit to check
Whome'er engages here to wound desire.
Mark thou the adornments god-like I display
So full before thy prying impulse shown !
Is not the Eternal pleased his works to scan,
And why not joy with secondary things ?
There is assumption of His tempting them,
Or spreading incongruity in all.
Whose bearing would be grandest must be taxed,
Questioned for following the lead divine ;
But least should spirits votive unto Love
Indulge their presence irksome or employed
To mar another's peace or preferment.
On these, my attainments self-secured, let Heaven
Muse and be proud to profit, but no more !
For if consistent even in Love none dare
Essay to penetrate these interests,
As such infliction will but point to hate. . .
Thus thwarting thee, I pose high vested powers !
Assail, if thou would'st kindle anger here—
Advance, but not with claims of Love and Peace,
Defiance is alone confronting thee.
So gleamed the towering demi-god opposed,
Distended more in pride than for defense.
But bright Ithuriel endured not long
The flaunted lineaments of vanity
To shade the wicked, nor yet intercept
The glorious furtherance of heavenly Light,
For thus shone deep and far the herald pure :

Huge Mockery ! well pleased am I to meet
With this new proof of the sure course of right ;
Presenting, as thou dost, the means whereby
Entire Elysium may witness worth !
Is not the occasion affable to thee
Which gives thy prominence such audience?
If virtuous, thou may'st tender gratitude
To me for efforts yet unhailed with joy ;
Impregnable, then wilt thou seem a god—
Great in exposure, thou the more admired.
But most the ambiguous impute vague terms
To those their covert reasons fail to reach,
And so forestalling, would'st thou lay to God
Things undefined to others or thyself.
Congruity is only found in Him
Who urgeth but to likely concord all ;
Nor questions pleasure of a creature's ways
Aware how merits bring their sequences.
Know ye not Love composeth first and last
The full, sole aim and measurement of good,
And that the grateful to maintain are blest
Not more by advancing peace than weakening sin ?
For even the blasphemous, though self-condemned,
May yet be stayed from further wrong and woe !
Nor can what now I hasten to fulfil
But show Truth's kindness—so may all the ill
Thy vanity has bred be proven enough.
He flashed, and as when lightnings sweep across
Some facing cliff its foliage frail is tossed

To hang on every jut the shafts unearth
O'er empty chasms fantastic decked before;
So suffered Asmodeus when forth showered
Ithuriel's godly rays that bared and lit
All vacant ostentations to the view
Of Heaven, that the false one's plight imposed
Example terrible of vain display,
Whereat the wicked awe-struck drooped as shamed
To find their schisms and not themselves despised,
While Truth's attendants, in their trust attached,
Rejoiced around the leader dignified.

If broadest space that mortal vision spans
Might show a conflict possible of lights
In myriads, those of unclean gaseous flame
With sickly glare and lurid gloom exposed
Before the pure electric cones that throb
As though exultant of new splendors clear,
The sight would mark in miniature that scene
Which triumph then recorded beautiful
In glory to the great Omniscient, pleased
To note His grateful heroes in success
Still raised above the enmity of those
Who learned how low through hatred they compared,
And how exemplified Love's tenets were.
But such great instances bear following,
And many were the victories in train
For Truth's adherents over pride's enslaved.
Sad Asmodeus not alone sustained

The burden of exhibiting himself
A moving monument of wrecked conceits,
Though still unsoothed to meet associates
In woes and mockeries alike beheld.
Yet not their sufferings pleased the virtuous;
But trust that this experience might end
Pursuance of the same, deserting sin,
And that conviction now would reverence God;
To all the lesson lasting evermore
Of good that peace commends to liberty.
So should humanity the world salute
When bursting vanity betrays the proud;
For such consideration but adapts
Man's soul with Mercy's chosen to abide.

Where highest yet the conflict glowed intense,
Among colossal bands of seraphim,
Ranged Michael, from whose flaming, evil shrank
Withered to hideousness, that frighted those
Possessing it, no less than did the light.
Involved in doubt as Beelzebub appeared,
Reserved, no just one willing to forestall
Their leader's claim for this encounter great,
Now met who once associate had been
The grandest in their glories, first in Love,
Still scarce estranged, though hopelessly adverse,
One bright in faith—one darkened from despair.
When verged God's champion with a port that bore
Compassion mellowing sublime resolve,

Thus charging sin before attendant Heaven.
O, parent of Calamity ! Thou whom
The ranks of glory hailed with pleasure once
Their gracious lead, their honor worthiest deemed
In God's acknowledgment. Even yet, abuse,
Such vestiges divine about thee cling,
In sacred panoply they shroud thy ruin.
The earlier interest which was our wont
To exchange in fond and high communion past,
Prompts now my service to destroy that bane,
Thy accursed ambition, lest it bear worse ills !
Accept this then, my offering of Truth,
Which foremost curbs thy being in barrenness,
At once so swift the champion's puissance fell
Upon the other, judgment was surprised,
And o'er the proud one's bearing anguish passed,
Who yet superior thus on Michael turned :
Esteemed antagonist ! Well borne is woe
Received from thee, grand colleague, once endeared ;
But since, an aid become of cruelty—
Of Him exulting in subordinate laws,
Which unrepealed remain to inflame and scourge
My worthy following in this revolt.
Why is the pleasure of the million scorned,
Or why so many subjects of distress,
If to our good His power be ever bent ?—
Oh, better that eternal idleness
Which held Him long in lethargy profound,
Had never waked creative energies,

Or caused what freedom and example mock!
Hadst thou not robbed me of all further aim,
I might have given thee tokens of my wrath
And sent to Him the vengeance of His work;
But yielding gratitude is thine instead,
Since thou hast freed me from the risk at least
Of future disappointment,—faithful boon—
My peer of old this honor hath alone.
So closed the Lucifer, now darkening as
An orb whose last eclipse enwraps it round,
When Michael more in rectitude resumed:
The feeblest fancy haunting evil's wreck,
Conjures to shift the blame of chosen ills
Upon a scorned Provider's ministry.
To suit each vain caprice, the violent
Would have their whims displace eternal laws;
Would rule their Ruler with conflicting change,
Disclaiming Justice, countermanding Love,
Denouncing Wisdom and subverting God.
But of all blasphemous absurdities,
Presumption of creation is most dark!
When thou—O sad conceit—gavest being to
The foul but fatal Satan didst thou judge
If Heaven required assistance of thy will?
Hadst fathomed then the unbounded Universe,
Whose Spirit is thy God, and traced throughout
The ageless course of His creations far—
The date and scope of His perennial plans?
When spirit spark of recent consciousness

Presumes upon the infinitudes of Being,
It overstrains that faculty, confirmed
As an infinity—the power it hath
To contemplate its Maker's magnitude
Without divining the inscrutable.
Thus Michael, and through heaven reverence swelled,
Though cast the malcontents in sullen mood.—

As likely is the insolence of man,
When self-sought miseries upon him crowd,
Summoned, enforced to follow, but disowned,—
Imputed ever to illusive fate.
If wrath, intemperance, envy or neglect
Invite a train of terrors and regrets,
With child-like petulance mankind bewails,
Craves this suspense or that reverse of laws,
And, failing, tries to fix the blame upon
A good but disregarded Providence.
Men dare to claim in bloodshed or dispute
Their great Creator as accessory;
For some one worshiped hero's interest
They urge, expect the elements to yield.
Petitions contrary their wrangles frame;
And thus their humors fain would prostrate Heaven—
Would pray grace into politics and make
A special Legislator of their God.
Nor need such gross profanities surprise
While ministers of morals lend their aid
By storming with distrusts the tides of life,

Loading with foreign fears the buoyant soul
And sinking sacred in familiar terms.
A novel press renowns not only these
But false professors of another school,
Who more advanced in age than truth or wit
Deny all spiritual entity
And prate sensation for sensation sake.
Seek out the savage who alone derives
His light from nature and compare his views
With forced materialistic heresies.
Ask him if at that boundary blue of sight,
That utmost limit of material sense
His consciousness is stopped. If still beyond
The wall, where rest all organ, animal,
His mind is moved—if on the infinite,
The shoreless sea of space his thought is launched,
What agent then sensates the passive brain;
What occupies such province but the soul?
Even childhood scarcely starts from infancy
Before its spirit bursts through all fixed bounds,
Spurning the violet veil that lines its cage,
To reach those endless realms congenial:
Oh, when the fledgeling soul has rent apart
The visioned shell of firmament too small,
Though its first flight be weak, each pause gives strength
For range eternal and immensurate,
Leaving earth's limitations in contempt;
As face to face with God's vast latitudes

It contemplates the incomprehensible !
No grade however grand of intellect
Fills this capacity of humble mind,
But highest, holiest influence therein
Attends the play of spirit that aspires.
Hence mark the leech of learning, full of pride,
Laboring some small, weak folly into life—
He has despised his soul's prime privilege,
And finds himself like Lucifer at fault
Before the less pretentious but more wise.

When Satan startled, raging at the change
Which Michael's miracles had introduced,
Sped maddening amidst the desperate throngs,
Sin's fiercest, last resort was tried to shock
The reverent, though at sacrifice of those
Who viciously submitted gifts of God
Even to destruction of their graciousness.
Infuriate on this evil bent, the fiend
Inflamed each lofty ally, till there spread,
Exchanged along, the desecrating flame,
In vengeful frenzy of expiring pride.
But Wisdom's hosts apprised immediate
With their own presences of light o'erwhelmed
The rash designers in bewilderment,
Ere satisfied they turned from their pursuit.
As if where ocean's devious coast is fringed
With tree-plumed mountains towering many a league,
Impelled by storming fury fire might leap

From one high monarch to another on,
Until the conflagration general grown
Should threaten to destroy all verdant signs,
If suddenly aroused to fabled force
The sea's indignant bosom swelled aloft,
And surging forward when at dreadful height,
Launched its huge tidal waves precipitate
Upon incipient ruin, quenching it,
Such panorama fair would be in point,
So grandly the angelic struggle closed.

Retiring now, the humbled respite found
Most welcome, from Love's loyal ones, removed
In joy of vindication thus complete;
While Raphael, blessed remedy ordained,
Attended on by signal cherubim,
Through grace conveyed God's pleasure to the good
And happiness of promise ministered;
Reserving not from the dejected ranks
What trust or solace the commission held
Respecting duty at fulfilment stayed.
Impartial in the message Mercy sent,
The heavenly physician blessing passed,
Dispensing calm and kindly peace to all,
Lulling like evening's light dispassionate.
This generous interval as by decree
Gave place for meet reflection, which improved
By the devout, with gratitude was spent
Preparing for the glorious advent near;

But by the willful wasted in abuse
And vain contentions of renewed defense—
They who withdrawn malevolent remained
Of Heaven still defiant in their hate.

Moved meanwhile to occasion thus conferred
The Trinity, when all creation paused:
Love shall go forth, in Person qualified,
Where privilege of duty has attained
Such worthy end, and where rebellion waits
Its final meeting with the Lord of truth.
Before that Presence, joyous to the just,
No sinful thought may stand, but find escape
From Heaven merciful, through ways of woe,
The sole recourse to such unfitness left.
So joined the Persons in the Word divine,
And mantling of entire existence forth
With raiment bright of eons numberless,
From the deep womb of the infinite advanced
The Son of God arrayed in majesty.
There shone the potencies miraculous
And the direction of their purposes;
Onward as well the mystic methods urged,
As manifold in order as the spheres
Which beaming through harmonious motion strove
In service of adornment round their Will.
With countless benedictions radiant,
Promotive to all generous designs,
Each, every token of Divinity

Flashed o'er his vesture of the universe,
Above, beyond the verge of spirit powers
Reached still the moving elements afar,
To concentrate obedient before
Heaven's wondering beings at their King's approach.
Well had the worthy chosen to be prepared
For this great advent, where their very joy
Awakening out of awe from thence partook
Such reverence, that by its spell restrained,
Though enraptured, they forbore from what transpired
And only witnessed in astonishment.

But the adverse—oh, what sudden change was there!
Even now He was upon them—Him, their God—
To Whose majestic course opposed they found
Their miserable means discomfiting.
Nor as an enemy debased to rage
Met they supernal Dignity; but each
Surveyed enough in that impressive charge
To burden memory with eternal pain.
How mean their evil million now compared
As o'er them loomed the spectacle sublime
Which decked all Heaven with resplendence new;
The unfailing motives, laws immaculate,
Organic orders, standards and decrees,
Veiled in that vision of Beatitude.
Scarce rose the Word thus manifest upon
Their herd dishonest when confused they turned

And consternation seized them in its spread.
O'erwhelmed with shame, abhorrence of themselves,
Abashed they shrank even from the light of Love,
As sunk in sin they realized at last
Their hopes with Heaven irreconcilable.
Before them all magnificence and might
Approached unfolded in one Personage,
Whose changeless chastity confounded sin
And filled the false, save Satan, with remorse.
Onward Truth's sovereign, awful aspect came,
And fear upon them fell—resistless, blind,
They plunged into the wild and wide abyss
Below and far beyond all realms of light,
In terror sped, as if from Heaven hurled
Forth through the dark, dread wilderness of waste—
That moat of misery less terrible
With all its horrors than God's countenance.
The demon Selfishness along was borne
Unnoticed in their numbers falling midst
The meteor flood into obscurity:
Alone remorseless, indisposed to yield
Submission to eternal Government.

But not to nature are such powers consigned
As might impress the senses faithfully
Of what dismayed, still terrifies the fallen,
Though banished from that scene forevermore.
Were the dead thunders of past centuries
To roll again and roar in chorus loud,

Should the sky's arch be woven with a shroud
Of lightnings darted close and intricate,
While from expanses distant and unknown,
Strange planets and their agencies came on,
Crowding throughout the grandeur of the rest,
Man's little multitude, so proud before,
Deranged or struck with fear, would cast themselves
Upon the earth in hope to hide, or change
Their wonted boasts and impudence to prayer.
Yet even fright like this could not acquaint
The world with sin's alarm when met above
By the grand Master of these servile powers,
Whose bidding they have ever waited on.
His gracious Will, assaulted while benign,
Imposed such lasting shame upon despair,
The very gulf they vanished in was deemed
A pall which Mercy cast to cover guilt.

What contrast of condition can assume
That state with theirs whom Glory had enrolled,
When never height of happiness attained
Or previous flight through Love's conjunction high,
Gave promise of the altitude of bliss
Which it was now their competence to reach.
Not His great triumph, though astounding faith
And passing judgment strong and swift as theirs,
Lifted His loyal to the rapturous plane
Of ecstasy, on which upheld the while,
They joined thanksgivings in their fond return.

The grace supreme to consciousness vouchsafed
With every prestige of the One revealed,
So raised, exalted above former joy
Their holy lot, that, lest endurance fail,
Or powers unable to sustain so much,
Should waver in amazement from reward,
The gracious Monarch of magnificence
Withdrew in glory, that such splendors might
But mildly beam along through memory's length.
So to the Father the victorious
Returned. Secure and free, forever rid
Of Selfishness and sin, the realm of peace
Renewed, enhanced with bounties of the chaste,
Proved to devotion its just heritage.

Alas, how different and deplorable
The state to which pride's willful subjects fell!
From sphere so lofty swept to grade so low—
From Heaven's zenith to perdition's depth.
Estranged, affrighted, one the other shunned
Through regions made infernal by their fears;
And to avoid whatever could recall
The direful past, all now were enemies;
For each an accusation was that cursed
Like maledictions to itself when crossed.
Thus driven in constant dread as fugitives
Apart they cowered from every intercourse,
Most fearful of the signs of Providence,
Which were sufficient even there to meet

Ingratitude and turn it back in shame.
Pursue the swiftest of a startled herd,
And mark its manner of despair when checked
By some impassable barrier or pit
More dreadful than evaded violence.
Wildly it turns in terror and distrust
To plunge, though hopeless, on some other course,
Headlong it heeds not so the passage serves
Even for the moment to defer its frights.
Keen as each effort racks a limb inflamed,
The fiercer strained through misery prolonged,
There is a limit to enduring nerve
Where bursting sense or vital frees the brute.
Not so with woes that spirit dares enlist
To haunt and harass it eternally;
For conscience heeds no physical reprieve,
But vigorous survives desire itself.
No respite reached the wretched in that hell
Their pride provoked, where mutual reproach
Incensed such burning hatred that they raged
As actual furies warring when they met,
Or hid distracted in remotest glooms,
Inhumed in self-found dungeons of despair.
But these dark solitudes wherein they sought
A melancholy measure of escape
Revived remembrances like inward flames
Leaping through lurid memory—mad tongues
Of torture more insufferable yet,
Impelling to worse change of doubt or strife

The weakest of their number desperate.
Yet were there many stoical enough
To bury in the deepest dismal chasms
Their beings immovable—through ages doomed
In coldest hades far to agonize
Alone, save with the pitiless retrospect
Forever crowding vivid, terrible
Upon confinement most excruciate.
So grim was each peculiar anguish there,
That to encounter was to suffer like,
Curst by its spell forever afterward.
Woes that were individual at first
The frantic through their wrathful contact spread,
Till with all agonies convulsed they writhed
A conscious chaos in eternal throes.

O man! if from position valued once
Greed has abducted, has degraded thee,
And as a traitor to thine own esteem,
Made thee a target for contempt of those
Joined in example infamous; if all
It is thy destiny to meet accuse,
Attack thee as thy presence them assails;—
Or exiled long to lonely latitude,
If thou wouldst sooner bear thy sorrow thus
Unseen, though recollections scourge thee mad,
Thou hast but a foretaste of infernal woe,
Poor victim as thou art of Selfishness.

BOOK III.

Among the mighty works of God, this world
Rolled fair in primal bloom and impulse fresh
Through course ethereal on her errand blest
By Wisdom. Light had wooed her bosom warm
At nuptials hallowed by the sovereign Word;
And pregnant every element was made,
Bringing forth perfectly its various kind:
So that amidst her sisters grand she moved,
Another miracle of beauty planned
Wondrous and worthy of her Origin.
Nor left alone when from too warm a liege
Her blushing face was turned, but followed still
By calm attendant ever near to shed
A gentler glance upon the mistress bright.
Nursed on her breast, the tender germs of life
Drew thence such vigor they soon towered in strength,
Or nimble bounded o'er the buoyant ground,
Or darted through the ambers of the deep,
Or soared like zephyr free on graceful wing.
Agreement tuned the whole. The very hues
And shades their neighbors met and splendors matched.
Sounds only swelled and undulated so
As fitted ever their harmonic waves,—
Earth was a paradise that glowed within
The vestibule itself of higher Heaven.

But rich as were the many charms she bore,
None dazzled like the last that from her sprung,
And rose erect a master over all,
Herself the partial servant of his will.
Even as the fountain's minute globe reflects
The firmament entire with monster suns
Embraced in compass small, but adequate,
So earth's first intellectual sphere, that soul
Transcendent, massed and circumscribed the rest.
For Adam, with his counterpart complete,
The fairer Eve, companion of his side,
Was made in image eloquent of God;
Not in the carnal mold as animals,
But by immortal spirit's interchange,
Involving all conditions: as in Him
Whatever force is extant finds a place,
So man, the prince of nature, honored with
Dominion and provisional estate,
In whose great charge inferiors were placed,
Auxiliaries to his glory, reigned by right,
The spiritual likeness of his Lord.
If in the exercise of government,
His attributes entrusted were but used
To bless the bias of dependent growths,
Man's mission upon earth might deify;
Since so he best could add his benefits
In honored tribute to his Father's work.

Twain guests, in compliment of whom the feast

Of nature spread and offered every sweet
That mind or body grateful could digest,
But of the service ministers as well,
Equal, though functions different engaged
Their adaptations—one, more muscular
To bear such burdens as would recreate,
Or serve to save the weak or curb the strong;
The other with deep sentiment endued
And patient power for duty's long support,
Their union was the bond of happiness,
The promise of promotion; both as guides—
He to direct the larger course of things,
She the details essential to command.
Both, too, were guardians specially designed:
Her fondness to defend the delicate,
His courage to maintain life's enterprise,
Gave their joint being its true efficiency.
They were but one; for either incomplete,
Required those member faculties to meet
And make effectual that force combined,
Which was their full identity, though found
In tastes and opportunities distinct.

When brought together, she beheld her spouse,
The master of each sense, approaching her,
In stature dignified, whose vigor's play
Defined through every limb to where in strength
His massive shoulders reared the noble neck
And poised that edifice of reason high,

The lordly head, which shone with marks divine,
The grand entablement of intellect.
But she, the marvel of his vision first,
In roseate beauty bent, robbing the beams
Of every blossom—earth's bright charms eclipsed
Beside the fairest of created forms,
Their queen. Chaste model—type of centuries—
Translucent the pink current flowed, refined
And lit with warmer loveliness that face
On which as Adam gazed, his reverence, love,
Rose from the perfect creature to her God,
She joining with like gratitude her mate.
Nor tho' his outstretched arms seemed made to shield
In fond embrace and strong security
Her tender figure, dimpled, round and soft,
Was she drawn to him with that simple trust
Which won and blended their two natures then :
It was his countenance, whence heaven-born light
Came pleading from those mirrors of the soul,
That reached response of kindred purity
And proved an influence over distance coy.
From that dear moment, wedded by the Will
That gifted them with powers reciprocal,
Their thoughts and acts according qualified,
In unity appropriate they went,
Amid the wonders of their Maker's works ;
To enjoy and spread the good again—to lead
And cultivate and so themselves be trained
By Wisdom, Love and Justice joined therein,

Promotive to their great inheritance.
For not alone those messengers of light
From Heaven descending through Love's privilege
To mingle and communicate with man,
Raised mediums of pure intercourse on earth :
The very ground on which the human foot
Pressed in glad wanderings was sanctified—
The forest, foliage, rivers, hollows, heights,
Birds, beasts, and insects, all imparters were
Of divine, consecrating Energy.
Wherever Adam and his partner turned
They met the sacred Presence and communed,
Not only through means physical with Him
In Spirit known, seen, heard, and felt throughout—
For every sense responded to its Source,
And recognized whence reason first obtained—
But by the soul's affinity which found
Acquaintance and resolve within itself
Linked in alliance with immortal Mind.

So holiest converse through concerting hours
With Him their inspiration passed direct :
And by corporeal ways as well they learned
To educate, possessed to give, and saw
Their state exemplified in Providence.
A thousand branches held out sweets for them,
Of fair variety—so plenteous, rich,
That need was not their danger but excess,
When evil influence subservient came

To try their merit of obedience.
But this, God kindly as imperative
Impressed upon them, which to demonstrate,
The laws of life were opened full to view,
And nature made to illustrate in aid.
As from the trees they gathered pouches filled
With savory meat and moisture, and partook
Refreshed, with gratitude they turned to Him,
Their hearts acknowledging the genial tide
And throbbing health ; so when their spirits shared
Those generous graces which fed moral life,
The soul of each exultant swelled in praise
And thankfulness, expanding as the blooms
That bend unfolded glories caught toward
The fount of light upon whose beams they thrive,
Returning incense breathed in fragrant sighs.
When browsed the sturdy beast upon sweet shrubs,
And pruned unknowingly waste weakening ends,
Truth's pupils saw the brute pass sugar cups
In tempting reach, untouched though coveted ;
For there a tiny ambuscade of spears
Defensed secure from monster jaws the food
That insect families depended on.
Then as the thrifty bee, contrasting so,
Lit safely humming on the same and drew
Its nectar, yet unsullied left the flower,
And flew to hive with providential bread,
The lesson light at first enlarged while both
Received its many messages devout

In mind, as thus the Master them addressed:
Behold, my children, how to all extends
The rule of Justice and the care of Love—
How Wisdom marks the rights of great and small.
But from these methods to their meanings pass;
And as ye trace, though slightly drawn, the lines
Which show so little of Almighty Will,
Know, that what seems unworthy in its need,
Is still some sentence in the book of life,
Which power judicious leaves unchanged therein.
The bough with vigorous tendrils might be made,
And not present a second usefulness;
The thistle might beyond the reach of brute
Distil its golden liquor for the winged;
Or bee might feed on grosser particles—
Or none of these conditions have been formed—
But that their evidence plain, constant, true,
Proves man's instruction and remembrance claims.
Yet reason rests not here. Observe ye must
What caution hath restrained the stronger one
From needless greed that Order interdicts:
Mark how My favor fosters the minute
But prudent gatherer—what grateful song
Attends its seasonable exercise—
How Love suggests and Wisdom deigns to assist
The building of its sheltered treasury.
So emulate, both as superiors then,
And as My creatures; worthy, if by will,
Able since free, ye come entitled of

The glory Justice holds from things enforced.
To each is given abundance for its weal:
Even though the brute is checked, behold in it
An instrument of virtue. And the fruits
That I have made so plentiful for man
Shall he enjoy; but neither shall his good
Nor that of others follow, if in self
He sinks, and parts from Government his trust.
For in the hour ungrateful he partakes
Of that the tree of evil knowledge, branched
In midst of all the rest, will he lose Life;
And thence his soul from happiness expelled,
Through generations doomed to pain will pass.
Though, Adam, thus I warned thee formerly,
Think not that Judgment nominates by fear
Or with reward the spirit's interest:
Such were to wrap in covetousness close
The effect of being, dissonant from its God,
Whose Love solicitous would move in tone
The soul's progression to that Triad true
From which and unto which all concord comes.
Herein is Justice fundamental found
According with divine Love mediant
And Wisdom dominant—which harmony
Throughout creation is the law of good.
Thus counseled their Creator; and they heard
Through eye as well as ear, through taste, through touch;
And head and heart bore witness to the soul

Whose gratitude and homage gave response.

Again, while yet the day was young and bright
In vernal promise, as they wandered where
A thousand beauties met in mingled spell
Felicitous like to the holy Voice,—
A spot so cushioned with soft grass and flowers
The foot felt kindness, and more reverent pressed
Not o'er its border, satisfied to be
In sight and sound rejoicing with the place—
As from a crystal vein that coursed its heart
Light mist updrawn still hung on colored beams,
Draping with beautiful prismatic veil
All growing charms bespangled in the train.
They studying delighted, listened to
The Word melodious thus apprising them
Of their advantages a second time:
Attendants, witness in this garden given
A gracious figure of the mind, whose growth
Is represented vividly. Alike,
The soul unbosomed to receive the seed
Of Wisdom, whence its fruits can only come,
Shall feel the warmth and light of Justice sent
To strengthen it—shall find Love bountiful
With timely blessings showering from above.
But influenced by that Sun should be drawn forth
Life's own love exhalations, offered up
In generous semblance to combine by will,
Though slight its impulse, with Beneficence.

Such effluence shall more virtuous be returned
And spread enlivening its place of birth
Which is the brighter Eden of the mind:
Therefore, let both remember, each observe,
That life's prime duty is to cultivate
This mental garden for whose energy
And godly correspondence grace descends.
To join with Justice, man must needs be just,
To meet Love, show congenial interest;
To bear for Wisdom, prúdence must exert
But good, for evil thereto is not wise.
So may the breath eternal pure remain,
Becoming of its God an actual part.
He ceased, and fragrance filled the air around,
Unstirred the while by bird or leaf, such peace
Held all; but now as from restraint of joy
There burst forth carols swelling nature's choir
Of sounds into one universal psalm,
Voiced with thanksgiving, by its leaders thus:
"O Thou! exalting us above our hopes,
By courtesy august, with privilege
Of Thy supreme conjunction—higher right
Than fancy ever could have ventured to—
Accept benignly this fond hymn that flows
From our excess of happiness in praise;
Though Thou hast need of no such canticle,
Since all Thy works majestic chorus chant
To Thee, resounding through the infinite:
Yet from that honor Thou hast shown to us

Receive meet glory of our gratitude
If from assurance we in tribute rise
Above accessory things. O, may our life
For Thy divine affiliation reach,
By glad fidelity, a worthy state,
In which the blessings of Thy trust may find
Befitting value if not recompense."
They sang, while like an organ's many pipes
In grand accompaniment, all feathered throats
Trilled out their tenors, some more mellow tuned
To mezzo compass ; and the lowing herds
With deeper vocals joined their varying bass.
So rose the natural anthem to the skies,
Reverberating in the spacious vault,
Where hosts of angels thronged for audience
Invisible, though reaching even the earth
And those related spirits Love employed.
As one their pleasure kindled at the strain,
In whose emotion mingling they were borne
Away with ecstasy to celebrate
Anew the great Composer gratified.—
Though science since has regulated sounds,
The earliest airs harmonic order told ;
For music as the mother of all arts
Was even more charming in simplicity
When prattling gleeful at creation first :
Hence joy angelic with the choral loud
Augmenting its pure import, raised to Heaven
The measure magical of soul and sense,

Which song was then and will forever be.

Now with their guardian angels who remained
Ever beside them, faithful officers
To warn of danger and their records keep—
Those titles for eternity prepared,
Momentous deeds, earth's only valid claims—
The studious scholars happily were led
Along the stream's bright pathway to observe
What wealth and luxury adorned its sides;
How glowing gems and precious metals gleamed,
Unvalued but by heavenly glances then;
How starry blossoms, frailer though they were,
More richly spangled all the emerald bank,
Or, reared for higher decoration, decked
With garland clusters, boughs that promised fruit.
And as they journeyed, he with noble gait
Restrained the giant strides his strength would urge
Beyond her speed, whose graceful step delaying
Charmed more than aught attractive checking it.
His bearing regal as hers delicate
Gave to their movements, though above vain pride,
Such fascination that inferior lives
Followed at distance or about them flew,
Drawn seemingly by reverence reassured;
For clothed in dignity and stateliness
That knowledge of their high alliance wrought,
They conscious walked with Majesty divine.

Thus onward, learning from the breathing leaves
And lisping waters, they at length arrived
Where sparkling radiant came a second stream,
Bright as a bride, and joined the stronger flood,
Both sending up mellifluous sounds like song
At jubilant connection. This to scan
With full advantage which the vale denied,
They sought a cliff, near by, whose crest was bent
As though in meditation o'er the scene.
Up its huge side ascending, scarce midway
They rested some few moments to restore
Expended vigor; but the pleasant pause
Tempted the muscles to remain at ease
And with the partial view be satisfied.
Here combat of the physical began
With spiritual principle; but short
And most decisive, for that Orderer
Of unions made the carnal servant to
The moral, vesting mastery in will.
So then as with one impulse they arose,
Desire of soul asserting over sense
Command; when Adam thus accosted Eve:
"Dear partner! while I aid thy feet to mount
This height, perhaps thy reason, too, like mine,
Ascends a plane for thought less difficult;
And thou art pleased to note how spirit rules
Considerate its nervous vehicle."
To whom thus she, whose voice more fluent turned
Than quavering reed, made music of response:

"My noble mate, I wonder not that thoughts
So similar should at one moment start
Like buds that on two different stems appear,
Twin beauties: hath He not ingrafted us
And from one common root designed a world?
Yet when this eagerness of soul to rise
Gave token of its Relative inspired,
The greatness over bo dy of the mind
Measured His estimate of both to me,
And proved how hope for sustenance of will
Provides encouragement at every stage."
Though more she might have added, they renewed
Their healthful efforts to attain the top
Till soon upon its pinnacle they stood,
Impressed and motionless at sight so grand,
Which never until now had gratified
Or won the admiration of such eyes.—
Imposing pair! could sculptors, since renowned,
Have seen ye then, with perfect limbs unmoved,
Whose lines defined so clearly from the sky
Seemed fitted to that generous pedestal,
The genius of each following age had shaped
His molds of elegance more loftily!—
O'er miles afar their gladdened glances leaped
Swifter than darts of light, even to that ring
By which horizon as it were through bond
Held the great form of earth in close embrace.
Some distance to the right a massive ridge,
With rocky pillars fluting its high front,

Stood in cathedral grandeur, like the seat
Of its sublime Designer, silent left,
But more impressive as a monument,
Whereon His awful power remained inscribed,
That time's presumptuous minikins might read,
Who fawn so readily to ruling force.
From mossy tufts which hid its pores of flint
Or rounded places angular, there crept
Long vines whose quaint variety of hues
Hung decorative to their tasseled ends;
While o'er the stony breast so dark and brown
Flashed sparks of quartz and crystals numberless
Among its streaks of virgin gold untouched.
The hastening beauty that about its base
Encircled halfway as with silvern charm,
Dashed laughing over rifts that trifling lay
Athwart the channel of her destiny.
Yet met she not the other too abrupt;
But bending thereto joined, and thence as one
Their course more proud in union swept along.

Still mute the exalted overseers stood;
The glance of Adam choosing to survey
Those leagues of land so picturesque that rolled
Afar, divided by the stream whose width,
Though swelled by brooks along its length, appeared
A dwindling thread wound through the distant wold.
But Eve with the stupendous structure near
Seemed fascinated; there her eyes were fixed

As in fond worship of its Architect,
Whose grand designing touched her kindred taste.
Hence longer as she looked, admiring more
Some jeweled steep or curtained eminence,
Her nature flooded with enthusiasm
Ran o'er at last, and thus her feeling flowed:
"O, Adam! is not evidence found here
Of our relation to the mighty One
Who raised yon holy pile magnificent?
My soul not only revels but so grows
Amidst these columns, that her magnitude
Exceeding them proves kinship to their Cause
In high capacity and judgment fine.
Our sense of sight and that of sound, though shared
Alike by every animal, still fail
To wake their wonder or attention claim;
While spirit mounting to her majesty
Above creation with her Author meets,
And mingles in His mighty sentiment!"
She said, and sweeter than discourse of birds
Or floral odors in their full exchange
Had ever filled the air with happiness
For Adam, rose and fell her ardent breath,
Pulsating such emotion that he gazed
Delighted, but surprised withal to hear
So rich a melody of mind find voice,
Reflecting silent for a time ere thus,
In answer which his face foretold, he spoke:
"Bright Eve, dear member of my inner life!

When rapt in revery so late I stood,
Although to broader range my thought was given,
The same inspiring study both engrossed
Which thou so well hast worded. From this spot
My sight pursued the waters, whence they met
Unto their distant goal, that sea unkenned,
But from whose womb immense our God hath shown
He called the earth and all her living tribes.
Here, then, I traced and hailed our symbol fair;
For noting how from junction of the two
Their power increased, the question came to me—
Perhaps propounded by some spirit nigh—
Why were they not united so at first?
And straight the answer followed, as I looked
Along the separate verdant course of each,
Far as the sight could reach toward their founts,
And witnessed thus their influence wide and fair
Shaping the oracle of Providence.
Oh, may we in like manner, having blessed
The special grades allotted us, at length
Advance with vigor of redoubled will
Toward the great infinity of Being;
And joined upon our way by weaker ones
Assist them onward to that boundless Life!"
His ending prayer recorded went, and both
Enjoyed the silence of devotion long,
Before they turned to leave the sacred place;
Descending by another slope, less slant
Than that they came by. Many were the themes

Called forth by things they met upon their path.
Once Eve so loitered, her associate
Retraced his steps some distance back to learn
What merited attention; there he saw
Fixed on a branch what seemed an insect tomb,
Though life was visible through its amber wall,
Whence issued slowly as in toil a worm,
By humble efforts gaining air at last.
Transformed in new-found light it put forth wings
Of rainbow splendor, fanning as to test
Their skill, then bold and sudden bore aloft
Its fairy plumage slight but adequate.
When Eve, like one who in some happy dream
Indulged with fancy feels naught else beside,
While following its bewilderment, exclaimed:
"Fair little pilgrim! thou hast pictured well
What glorious change may come of lowly life;
Restricted first to gradual gleams from Heaven
Till thou couldst bear them fully, shown thou hast
By endeavor, too, assisting greater power,
Thy right to rise above the creeping world.
Small as thou art thy lot expresses most
The Will's miraculous benignity!
And praising thee, I render thanks to Him
For promise so encouraging;—my soul
No longer questions of her future flight,
But therein trusting to adapt herself
In Heaven's promotion bideth patiently."
While fervent still she spoke they wended on:

But Adam strange in deep reserve was held,
As if some unseen spirit claimed him quite,
Communing though not pleasant, for his brow
Bent as to weight of thought unusual.
And so it was, albeit warned before,
He turned his mind to musing in this strain:
"Were it not wiser that our fate enforced
Made sure fulfilment like the flattered moth;
Or hath it knowledge to appreciate—
What is its hope, how may its graces please?
If ruled where is an insect's merit found
For such—if not whence this our mockery?
Have we from powerful motives been shut out,
Or why inspirit what to nothing comes?"
Thus dallying with notions troublesome,
Despite good spirits' protests, he went on
Until the fair one at his side in fear—
So penetrating is affection's glance—
Aroused him with the following eager words:
"Speak, dear companion! something doth annoy
Or leastwise hath perplexed thee; some dark thought
Unwelcome, or more dangerous perhaps,
That needs but help to banish or defeat"—
Scarce had she spoken, when before them sprang
An antlered racer at his greatest speed,
Rushing as with the noise of rustling wind.
Nor was it play that urged his hasty bounds,
But dread looked likelier, for he stood far off
With eyes dilated, then with dubious step

Returned by circuit round the place he fled.
They paused in wonder, following with concern
The creature's actions, though at moments hid;
When from a thicket opposite crept forth
What startled Eve, not that she feared approach,
But by its manner crouching, treacherous,
So noiseless stealing low along the ground.
The husband, too, grown pale, but not at beast
Whose frame he might have crushed, or cowed by look,
But that he felt some admonition near,
Marked every move the spotted monster made,
And saw it choose a secret perch in wait.
Soon with each sense alert, the deer was seen
To step within short space, and hesitate,
As curious to view—then closer come—
Ah, fatal curiosity ! at once
The savage leopard from its covert leapt,
Fastening with claws and fangs upon the stag,
Deep through whose furry coat the sharp points went,
As many jets of crimson bursting out
To trickle steaming from his trembling sides.
In vain the parrying horns were tossed about,
How futile every plunge for freedom lost ;
The foe tenacious sunk its brutal teeth
Into the heaving neck and rent its veins,
Swollen with prisoned blood, which once released,
Ran spurting, streaming forth and fell in pools.
Then the proud limbs, so swift before, grew weak
And quivered sinking slowly to the grouud ;

The round keen eyes in horror lost their sight,
And staring wide turned dull and blue in death.

Ere this transpired to shock Eve's tender sense
Would Adam otherwise with haste have rushed
And torn the panther from its frightened prey,
But for the hindrance of that Heaven-sent power
Already entertained within his breast,
Who salutary counsel thus dispensed :
Regard all Wisdom here allows to show
What danger is—how foul, how violent.
Behold a victim, fitted to escape
The fierceness of its cunning foe, seek ill
And find it ; while presuming to elude
The fate deliberate folly institutes.
One natural move at first would obviate,
By avoidance, useless struggles for release
When strait brings every effort in despair :
Apparent weakness woos the misery
Which shunned had but the warning threat of harm.
That freak inquisitive to know or doubt
So lately sprung from foe unseen, unknown,
But who at variance with peace and good
Even fills yon brute—the demon Selfishness,
Conception first of sin, by Heaven spurned—
Too base for that instinctive noble shame
Constraining prouder victims from the light,
Still rages restless to contaminate
Wherever life or sense occasion chance.

A fiend it is of spirit, not of God,
As such no object of His government,
But weak therewith in conflict, though by wiles
Most formidable, who designs and tempts
To failure the unwary from their strength,
Efficient while employed to mock deceit.
Adam, thou art a son of God endeared,
And should not deign to know inquity!
The thirst for knowledge not diverted is
Thy soul's essential appetite, required
As much for moral life as carnal zest;
Yet turned inquisitive for selfish ends
It makes the poisonous draughts of pain its own.
Still held in grace divine thou hast not fallen,
Though wavering close upon the brink of sin
Whence I would draw thee and approach dissuade:
For evil when avoided harmless laps,
But met is fueled, vitalized with rage.
Scorn then the contact—by Love's graces stand
In all thy greatness, safe, superior.
So moved the being remedial on man
Less for reproof than kind encouragement;
To whom while Adam answered mentally,
His tongue as in soliloquy spoke out:
"O, spirit liberal, possessing me
With caution just and influence of hope!
How has my heart distrustful given place,
Even for a moment, to that enemy;
When such small notice brought the breath of care

Upon me first, portentous of the storm—
I scarcely faltering before generous Love
Directed this high agency to guide
The action and the purpose legible.
As eye abhors yon bloody, sickening sight,
Does soul protest repulsion; and in this
Is shown her finer tone, that turns aside
From bestial and obnoxious things which jar
With principle derived of higher cast.
While human fairness loathes the foul decoy
Through trait inspired of Justice; while desire
Of mercy on the weak breathes Love's descent,
Still reason, like the Wisdom that endowed,
Discerns how blame is shared in mischief sought.
No gentler reprimand nor kinder grace
For doubtful bearing could have come from Him
Who is eternal Amity, and mutes
My humbled gratitude.—Yet her I love—
Ah! would I had not brought so chaste a life
On strife like this." He ended, gazing sad
At Eve, who none the less bore well her part,
Thus cheering as she led him from the scene:
"Come, my beloved, to where repose and prayer
May strengthen us. I am not harmed, but pleased
To be thy solace near in time of need;
Ordained in peace or trial one with thee
To baffle ills and moral profit hold.
Hence be not downcast, for I too have learned
From what was witnessed and thy words explained.

Like the fair valley which we now approach,
Echoing sweet bird-notes back more musical,
And smoothing loud, coarse growls to softer tones,
Our thoughts returned again from Heaven's profound
If pleasant, are made happier—if severe,
Gentle from ways of Mercy are restored."
When he, as urged the guardian spirit by,
Admonished needless, for the power of Truth
Awakened in her, ere the language passed,
These prudent mandates, lest her trust mislead :
"Thou sayest aright as echo meliorates
The various sounds of Earth, so all our thoughts
Return from Heaven chastened ; but believe
Reflected discord cometh not to good—
Nay, clashes ever with the temperament
Of things that Order makes agreeable ;
Whereas the virtuous, heightened to reward,
Impart a benefit throughout the whole.
Besides, remember that forgiveness moves
Compatible with Justice, and that grace,
Though boundless in its sphere, is limited
As sin annuls its value in amount.
Nor can the faith be fortunate which tries
Forbearance of the Infinite. As well
Might erring winds disturb the firmament,
As follies sway immutable design,
Or bring in contest the eternal Word
To palliate or compromise with wrong.
Salvation of the worthy is a mark

And motive of the Founder fixed in all,
The casual notwithstanding ; that which swerves
Yet is reclaimable, still rests within
The bosom of Conformity secure.
But here no haven for imprudent hope
To lift its sullied pinions to is left ;
Since nothing can more surely stay God's grace
Than thought of its encouragement to wrong."—
By this their steps had brought them where the pass,
Grown narrow, formed a threshold to the vale,
Leading toward their favored dwelling place
Secluded as a cloister in the midst.
On either side the pointed hills like spires
Inclosed the portal, thence receding spread
Their numerous peaks in semicircle round
And met beyond, a spacious palisade
That storming gales might beat against in vain.
The groves familiar with so many charms
Associated in that earliest home—
Those signs that sanctify whatever spot
Man fixes for his residence and rest—
The shading branches, flowery glades and walks,
The scents, the sounds, even the air and light,
All welcomed their return—they entering felt
Security surround them ; Heaven's peace
Descended on their souls enfolding them.
As on they passed the fruitful boughs reached forth
With what seemed richest of inviting stores ;
And, blest with relish the long journey brought,

They plucked and ate; yet ere they tasted raised
On open palms the gifts of God in praise.
No need had they for ceremonial board
To sit besotted at and gorge themselves—
The innocence of childish lips that press
A mother's milky lobes with trust supine,
Was theirs, when from the earth's maternal breast
They took their nourishment; so, simply pleased,
Of healthful manners only were they wont;
Whether on ground reclined sweet mites sufficed,
Or while they strolled to better light repast,
Their meals enjoined no swinish consequence.

Refreshed, they neared the habitation fair
Intwined and woven over branching beams
With bright diversity of blossomed vines
That breathed, a living labyrinth enriched,
Amidst the maze of which, though not a cage,
Birds many-hued as merry flew in song.
Nor these alone rejoiced to see again
Their masters coming; brutes that lingered round
The rural sanctuary, entering not
But waiting patient through the absence long
Which most of day consumed—for now the sun
From journey like their own to rest seemed bent—
Creatures with eyes affectionate, but shy
Lest tokens of devotion should offend,
Came bounding, with light feet and tossing tails,
Yet nearer curbed exuberance of joy,

And with demeanor reverent approached
To plead for recognition at their hands.—
The presence, sub-divinity of man
Hath ever made the beast sagacious show
Instinctive hope in friendship's overtures,
Whose condescension meets a gratitude
Of note that circumstance can never change.—
While intercepted by their speechless friends
The travelers stood, observant of those ties
Successive knitting them to lowlier love
As Heaven trancended in connecting grace.
The sky unrolled its gilded curtain clouds
To shade from solar parting rays intense
The beauteous face of paradise, suffused
With the rich blushes of the hemisphere.
That holy hour had come where Nature stays
All elements awhile as if for prayer,
Kindling, while yet her altar glows on high,
A dedicated flame in every heart.
So Adam's sentiment to song arose
Upon the evening silence: "Thou! from Whom
This sacred spell of splendor but reflects
The softened gleam of one fond dazzling glance—
For Whose bright blessing day devotional
Now pauses, nor departs ungraciously!
Like luster on Thy works, effulgence floods
My soul with Love's celestial radiance;
And peace more tranquil than the calm that spreads
O'er earth, comes on the spirit quieting.

I, too, await Thy benediction here
Before my entering step repairs to rest;
Assured because of Thine inceptive bent
To bless all members of the universe;
The least of which in Thee hath place consigned.
Because it is Thy glory to extend
Rejoicings through creation, we, ordained
With mind to meet Thy purpose, would befit
Our natures to such privilege devout
Above less gifted objects; glorified
To be subordinate in Heaven's Will,
Our happiness affording Thy desire."
And Eve, with beauty beaming in the glow
Of light that hallowed, chimed the key along:
"Whence, but from Thee, could such great bounty come,
O Magnitude of Goodness? Thou alone,
Inspirer of existence, couldst conceive
And yield a heritage like reason given
To qualify the gracious in Thy sight,
And bless in making minds of Thee aware!
For consciousness itself of Thine intent
Displayed amid the wonders of this world,
The godlike gift of power to join therein,
Is heavenly intercourse, which joy advanced
Prepares us for the bliss Thou hast reserved.
To be at all in Thee participates—
To know of Thee inducts supernal Life!
So that already, prompted we enjoy
Thy promised transport in degree as great

As purity and will have interest
And meet in Thy design magnanimous."
Thus, while the flowing ebb of twilight bathed
The sky and earth with splendor fanciful,
Those voices blending in their vesper hymn
Poured grateful music through the echoing vale ;
And calmly as the night drew on, they passed
Beneath their flowery roof to soft repose.

BOOK IV.

The answering heralds of approaching day
Had only sent abroad their clarion notes
And waked the woods to greet the rosy dawn
Which blushed approved before the smile of Heaven,
When forth the gifted couple fondly came.
The countenance of either brighter beamed
From renewed hope within than shone the east;
For kindly rest—extended most to mind,
As limbs relax in shortest space but fail
To furnish what intelligence requires—
Repose, God's sustenance to weakling life,
Had blest His children and restored their strength.

With hands extended high and faces raised
In trust that knew no manner of bad faith,
The heart of both, so much one feeling ruled,
Swelled, as when some orb's influence draws nigh
Two copious waves together rolled arise;
Thus joined they then to dedicate the day—
Their breath's first office at return of light:
"Great Spirit! in Whose keeping safe abides
The thoughtless myriad that night enfolds,
Swathing to mitigate diurnal rays
Whose heat continuous would overcome!

When every blossom opens to receive
The share of warmth its rising monarch showers,
Decked for the meeting fair in dewy gems,
While their sweet breaths acknowledging aspire,
May we with difference our souls expand
And send no fervor worthy of Thy grace?
When from the tuneful multitude on wing
Blithe trilling chorus fills the morning air
With thankfulness and joy as life revives,
May not our tongues in grateful tones announce
Fit sounds for Thee beyond example given?
Or when the heart of nature heaves again
With animation, while her face lights up,
Bright, fresh and glowing in Thy service glad,
Shall not our breasts to like emotions move—
Our glances beam responsive happiness
To Thine extended glory thus returned?
Behold! we hail Thy ascending minister
In robes resplendent, charged with blessed power,
Above dependent realms resume his sway,
Imparting justly to the least of things
The living virtue of his vested beams;
Perhaps in semblance of that sovereign Love
Irradiant even in our humble minds
Diffusing through creation to its ends
Volitional vitality required.
This day as others we devote to Thee
From Whom all fair occasions come; possess
Our spiritual bearing in Thy grace,

Since Thou art pleased to accept the fruits of hope
As we Thy bounteous blessings here enjoy."
So went their thoughts without the forms prescribed
By lettered methods of posterior times,
Or doubt presuming prayers too often heard,
Which speak distrust of God's benignity
And with conceits asperse His holy care.
In Eden faith was nurtured from its birth
By close, direct conjunction with the Word,
Found cogent in the ways of nature still ;
And hence pure confidence developed there
The spiritual issues Love begot.

While grandly rose the royal orb of light,
Increasing every moment as ordained
To graduate with vigor, not destroy
Earth's tender beauties, the impassioned pair
Together sought a running spring near by,
In which refreshing bath they thus indulged :
"Is it not pleasant claiming," Eve began,
When aught we choose exposes more the means
By which kind Heaven enlists our interest—
Invites participation blest and wise !
Hast thou yet noticed, dear and thoughtful mate,
How pure this generous current comes to lave
Our limbs from even lassitude which ease
So long continued through the night induced ;
Like constant grace that seeks us from on high
To freshen the soul should lethargy depress

Or haunting sin affront with presence foul?"
"Aye! further;" Adam answered, "as the sense
Of every fiber—hallowed each in being
A trusted part of His august ideal
In which conceptive it forever was—
Allowed might be inflexible to change,
But profitless as such, hence tends its use;
As from a ductile quality alone
Subject to will proceeds development,
When properly administered, for good,
Or yielded to perversity, for bad:
If then, these properties confided here,
And therefore sacred, though subordinate,
Obey so easily directions given
By habits various, should not our rule
Through choice command a just ascendency?
Moreover, when from spirit intercourse
We know of that dark, maddened fiend abroad,
Whose evil machinations would subvert
All good prospective in the plan of God—
That demon adversary fierce from woe,
In fury battling through the infinite!"
Considerate Eve returned: "From such appears
How night must be a guarded interval
Which high discretion takes into account;
For when the mind dismisses from its care
Material subjects so obedient,
Prudence dictates provision for the lapse,
Lest they forget their functions or desert.

While motive is suspended, are we not
Secured from influence or from approach
Of the evil spirit—is it not designed
A blessed reprieve in service of the Lord
To faithful trial from temptation freed?"
"It is indeed," her spouse replied, "a gift
For which our souls assisted are in debt;
But think not evening can arrest the course
Of duteous progress in the Sovereign's work!
No atom of existence ever fails
Amidst the general action to assert
Itself; though slight the bias, still it acts.
No sphere, not even the sun, may interrupt
The universal movement that goes on
As strictly as the law of time proceeds!
So that, although exempted from assault,
In rest we halt not, but recuperate—
Equip ourselves for day's more active hours.
One principle is proven in the change
Of conscious and unconscious things alike:
The germ that consummates, the streams that flow,
The air expansive and the circling sky
Announce the injunction of that Life above
Adverse to stagnate or destructive fall.
Regarding habits unavoidable,
As either fair or false, we must pursue,
Our inspiration teaches, too, that use
So moldeth nature to all practices,
They soon become as pleasures. Let us thence

Convert but worthy customs to desires,
Since so conformable all things exist."
Discoursing thus, their inclinations led
Through other pleasant ways to many themes;
Some, like the fragrant fruits on which they fed,
Gracious to sight and scent and taste at once,
Enamoured different sentiments of mind
So on the faculties combined they wrought.
From one fair subject radiated bright
A winning beam for each reflective power
Which gave itself entirely to the charm;
While thoughts thronged forward eager to respond
With magic meaning in enthusiasm.

They came upon a plot diversified
By strange assorted plants, the blooms of which
Contrasted so, Eve's notice rested there;
When Adam studious held, addressed her thus:
"Here, member dear to me, thou canst detect
The certainty which Providence hath fixed
In these slight, simple grains of His intent.
Remark this blossom which I barely touch
Before its light plumes separate and rise
On friendly airs as gentle as thy breath,
Each poising its own minute load of life—
For watch the seed it beareth to fresh fields.
Believe me, though the shrub be commonest,
Some good essential follows from its growth
That Heaven so carefully perpetuates.

There may be yet a destiny for man
To know all virtues stored in vine and herb,
Whose secrets earned of ministering balms
Must shed Love's forethought on the stolid even."
He paused, for Eve with pointed glance resumed:
"Beyond thy hand a trifle, grows mature
Another tuft with seeds protected like
Those blossoms smaller lives subsist upon,
Though barbed perhaps for other purposes;
Such as to fasten where they touch, or still
To work relapseless way into the earth.
They seem not food, however, for their coats
Are rugged as our fruit-seeds' sacred shells
That so resist sharp shocks and violence,
But open softly to the soil's embrace.
I doubt not in the sorts presented here
Are far results that we may never reach;
Yet one reflection from the study caught
Doubly repays our diligence. We meet
Our Maker's interest and also gain
A mental attitude more fit in Him."
"Yes, Wisdom moves thy lips!" the first rejoined:—
"And how else could it be when all around,
In act eternal, flash Thine aims, O Lord!
What though we view these intricate details
Through the vast fabric of Thy wonders wound;
Or might we know the calculations fine
That live beyond us; such would but disclose
A line in Thy profound solicitude,

Which holds the smallest of creations dear!
To mark how this involuntary flies,
While that transplants itself by contact slight—
To witness yonder shell exploding send
The germs it scatters far into the ground;
To infer the agencies of life most small,
Whose linked divisibilities extend
Beyond our present powers, can show, indeed
How deep Thy motives are;—though we alone
Participants in thought be limited
In entering on Thy glory infinite—
Assist our wills, devoted but in Thine!
For only so may hope itself aspire."
His deep voice closed with modulated tones
That edified the silence following;
While stood his loved one, picturing in her gaze
An admiration almost worshipful.
Ah! did not loftier ardor claim him quite,
Her praise unusual had taxed him then,
So warm, so passionate was beauty's beam,
Excessive in its glowing confidence.
There is a mastery which man exerts
On female fondness, specially for good;
But often brought by fancies overstrained
Without control of reason to default.
Love's compliment thus self-subordinate
Forever fostering and demonstrative
In woman hath most sway. Her charity
Takes of imagination half its own

And gives the one officiate of her heart
An exaltation not deserved ; his claims
Are gauged but by affection—she admires
What her apt tenderness exaggerates.
But Adam, noting not undue regard
From the fair follower at his side, passed on ;
Absorbed entirely as he entered more
The maze of natural wonders spread throughout
Their primal Paradise. It was enough
To claim unceasing interest from one,
Though constant to his Eve he turned in all.

Without recounting every incident
That hastened morning's radiant hours along,
Or noon recess,—another spirit there,
Not sinless as the two, nor guard divine,
But cunning, devilish, unmerciful,
The original antagonist of Heaven,
Satan—who from the deep profound inflamed,
Knew not of peace—restless, insatiate
Raged through the universe, attempting aught
That sin unsatisfied might master yet ;
Lurked in all places, led through paths unseen,
Yet bore the changeless evils self-imposed.
No gloomy cloud, though lashed and tossed by winds
Through adverse latitudes, in whose dark womb
Swelled pent-up furies threatening angry storm,
Could frown upon the beautiful of earth
As this foreboding phantom haunting Eden.

Mocked, scourged in madness from the depths of woe,
Cursed forth by victims only to be balked,
A foe and fugitive of consciousness,
The evil shadow fell upon the world
And cast but fixed not its foul influence.
Nor aim however difficult deterred;
Nor way so mean but that the grovelling fiend
Would bend unto. The lowest beasts, assailed
By instigating brutal appetites,
Served baser purpose, Selfishness beguiled,
Thus spreading enmity and fear about.
For spurious as this spectral terror came,
Given infectious spiritual place
In midst of God's creations, faultless first,
Of secondary power, allowed so far
As might by contrast make conspicuous
The visage horrible of vice exposed,
Temptation's character was still beneath
The most degraded thing accessible.
In like degrees as intellect and will
Below the Supernatural partake,
The sensual instincts animals possess
Obtain resemblance of the higher soul.
Made images not sensible as man,
To labor lightly for his benefit—
Reflectors of conditions scarcely known
And consequences good and bad defined,
Their patient ways, humility and peace,
And, more than all, aspiring gratitude

To man, apprised him of the difference
Of feeling which superi or thought enjoyed
From such, and those fierce contraries provoked,
Whose savagery disgusted and revealed
But one infernal spirit prompting them.
Some forms were fitted plainly to depict
The horrors, which that hidden enemy
Incited through carnivorous excess:
From these a line of circumstances dark
Reached down to grades involving many points,
Wherein the traceless evil spread confused.
To smaller agents the satanic spleen
Was passed, the meanest messengers of which
Conveyed disorder, but fulfilled decree;
Exposing pests that virtue must oppose—
Vexations weak, yet subjects of attack.
In this way creatures passive most in sense
Were made to represent those certain ills
Resulting closely from the impish power
Permitted to inflict them. Not distressed
With understanding which gives point to pain—
So justly measured are advantages—
But still by miserable tokens given,
They vivified the infamous effects
Of self-proclivities to human gaze.
Thus Satan's course uncovered in despite
The very violence craft bent to hide—
Stripped to the mind of man repulsive wrong
And served specific judgments overruled.

The clear Divinity commanding time
Touched lowest limits but for highest use;
So not the malice of ten thousand fiends
As Satan crafty could disturb the least
That fundamental Justice fixed therein.
Indeed, the ultimate of everything
Illustrates glory to the eternal Head:
Though sin assassinates its legions rash;
Though vice all victims good and bad ingulfs,
They with the author of these evils yield
Their pitiable tribute unto Truth:
Some by advantage suffering inculcates;
More by demonstrance of despair self-found,
But always serviceable to that state,
In which and for which only Heaven endures.

The foe of peace so often unrestrained
Left here and there such baneful signs of wrath
And violence among the soulless herds,
Humanity was shocked and called upon
To attend what care and training might amend.
Hence both the gentle keepers, placed above
The instructing Father's many ordered folds,
Not idle went; for each found ample field,
One sometimes forcibly befriending where
Blind sense scarce owned a benefit, but still
Rejoiced and recompensed in good performed;
The other given more to ministry
Of tender mercies that engaged brute love,

Inspired with softer manner, or indulged
The kindly qualities her nature nursed.
Earth bore the plainest mediums visible
Through which resultant knowledge came pronounced,
Exhibiting all phases, as they did,
Of contradiction to the sentiments.
As lowly gratitude from one kind pleased,
Creatures less sensible, whenever met,
Much though ungrateful ways dissatisfied
And proved distasteful to the highest thought,
Eden's superiors from these efforts learned
The great resource of patience, and were taught
To join their Maker's magnanimity.

Yet faithful as they heretofore discharged
The happy duties God hath blest them in,
A subtle trial awaited ominous,
Bearing upon their future close and dark
Its saddening sequel of abandonment.
As Adam fearless in his trust employed,
Both head and hand in benefits at large,
His fond, weak follower admiring him,
Often beside but frequently apart,
Gave foolish vagaries their fullest scope,
Heeding no liability the while,
Until through fancy every whim looked fair.
Ah, dreadful moment for so lax a mood!
The envious demon prompting, led her glance
To where the richest growth arose near by,

Amid which wound in green and golden coils
The monster serpent of that imp possessed.
Above, but nigh, with fluttering plumage bright,
A hapless bird attesting fear still sank
Toward the fascinating gleams beneath,
Down to its ruin as by magic drawn.
At each approach the trembling wings would rise,
But short retreat they made, checked with the will
That moved them—when at length, in easy reach,
The charmer's dart shot forward dealing death,
While Eve stood simply spell-bound, mystified.
The mournful sight that should have warned her then
Affected not the humor fanciful
In which she wantoned; eager but to know
What occult principle produced the charm,
Her mind saluted the insidious power
And careless of presentment sought a fate
Not half foreshadowed. Thus the prompter gained
Address upon the soul and falsely dealt,
Afflicting her with these unhappy thoughts:
Hath God denied man knowledge given the brute?—
We may enjoy but not this fruit divine,
So shared and tempting, lest we part with Life . . .
How can we suffer when our sense perceives
Alike fruition so mysterious?
To be as gods, such prestige to control,
Must overcome all lower orders here;—
And surely him my love would raise, should reign—
Nay—is the lord this spirit's praise exalts

Above the living. In his rule uncurbed
Would I be partner, not restrained as now,
But the sole object of his gratitude—
The one promoting genius that alone
Might worthiest share his worship afterward.
If Heaven envies what this branch may bear,
Presumably for greater mental state,
There starts a want of confidence at once
From out conditions. To enjoy the same
Must liken effects, and hence I dare indulge
The passionate desire so wise, whose might
My will from this on governs Sinning thus,
To Adam she conveyed the evil power
That wrought in him and wrecked their happiness;
For on the instant, they beheld themselves
Naked, infirm and mortal; not endowed,
But stripped of faith, their former shield, despoiled
Of natural innocence, and vainly strove
To cover the offensive signs of guilt.
Alas, the Infernal triumphed in their fall—
That incubus of evil grafted there,
Congenital must pass through ages long
To multitudes unborn, with moral bane!
Yet this had God eternally foreseen,
And merciful provided for, when Love,
Whose mastery in both the erring pair
Held sway upon their purpose; though they sinned
With spirit covetous in joint desire
Affection made their course redeemable

For each the other had designed to aid.—

O Majesty of Mercy! ever bent
Benignly over what the future holds—
Miraculous in goodness!—who hath mind
To comprehend aright much less to tell
Thy measures infinite, omnipotent?
Thou hast not only breathed into mankind
Thy gracious attribute so often abused,
But even to lives less rational bestowed
That sentiment protective of the weak,
Self-sacrificial for their interests!
Ere she, whose folly found the husband's fault,
Began, didst Thou determine that which saved!
In him as well, whom false ambition lured,
For her there weighed Thy partial principle:
So when to their salvation thus devote
Thou gavest sublime indebtedness, a way
For Thine inspiring Presence was prepared,
When man should need most the Companionship.

The frail had left that living state, which first
Gave spirit actuality—infused
Its animation joyous, strong and free.
So sudden was the change, so terrible
The end of happiness abruptly met,
That cruel stupor overwhelming them,
In dark and deadly trance their souls were plunged.
Remorse seemed as the grave—its gloom their shroud

Still, from proud attitude to prostrate shame
Cast down, even humbled with the dross of earth,
They only realized a stage of woe
Which better known would sink them in despair.
Less fearful comes disaster when by chance
Two daring bounders pampered, leave their field,
And curious from safe paths adventurous climb
To lofty boulders that forbid retreat.
Then self-reliant they attempt strange heights,
But headlong hurled bewildered to the ground,
Lie stunned and wrecked : far worse the fallen pair
Confounded thus in broken spirit lay.
As rebels from the holiest Government,
Distrust supplanting blessed obedience,
Clung to reproach, which never until now
Was known between them ; more than pitiful
The pain that mutual accusation glanced
On either sad, humiliating most,
As misery for the other was sustained.
Yet souls disloyal, that could so desert
The ever bounteous service of their God,
Are not conservers of fidelity
Inimical and low ; nor need they hope
For gratitude denied One worthier.
Their traitorous rupture parted for the time
That vital sympathy between the two,
Which blent both natures once identical:
Hence doubt, begun against eternal Truth,
Ended not therewith, but discountenanced

All faith of purpose to be found below.
Apart they suffered—silent—vaguest dread
Possessed them, and increased as waned the day.
Suspense stretched out its moments to an age
Through which swept spectral horrors multiplied.
Creation looked no longer beautiful,
But every misery of conscience mocked ;
Or in the joy of moving things, or peace
Of those insensible, approached a taunt
For envy, when despair most blasphemous
Would half-way question reason's Source divine.
The careless chanter free in air pursued
Where trivial pleasures led; the lazier brute,
Exempt from scruple, drowsed in comfort warm,
While blind the worm groped peacefully along.
Even lightest airs at play among the leaves
Appeared to have been favored more than man,
The sole subjected prey of fierce regrets.
When limit proved immunity at least
From evil so perfidious over will,
Why had not Heaven fixed unconscious fate
Throughout, or instinct rational restrained ?
Such was the wild disparagement their foe
Relentless added when the load of grief
Pressed heaviest upon them. But through grace
Of Love supreme, repentance was to come
With resurrection of the soul from sin.
Though shame might exile them from dear estate,
There moved within them ere the night arrived

The holy trait of pity, generous felt
And mutual, that reconciled their hearts.

While yet estranged though, day, as darkened by
Some brooding spirit of the air, declined:
Cold, threatening lowered the heavens, and all sounds
Hushed apprehensive of event unknown.
Black clouds and vast impending closed above,
As though the angry sky contracting frowned
The judgment of its Framer near at hand.
How likely for the sinners then to fear
Almighty wrath admonished of their doom—
About to whelm them from His outraged sight,
Prepared by these strange terrors. Awed they shrank
Where thickest tangled boughs might shield: there hoped
To hide from vengeance—oh, how vainly guilt
Presumes—distracting at the latest hour.—
The gloom grew denser. From afar they heard
Suppressed but dreadful thunder. As it rolled
They felt the awful voice of God abroad—
Moving upon them. Fright turned every thought
To horror vague, alarming still the more.
Crouch as they would in speechless, low dismay,
The mighty message of their Judge came on,
Appalling, supernatural in power,
And thus to them, re-echoed through all space:
"Where is my work?" so Adam weak replied:
"I heard Thy voice draw near and was afraid

Bare in Thy sight to be, and hid myself."
Thereat the Spirit's scrutiny inveighed
Their conscious souls on shameful knowledge found,
When both in desperate accusation strove
To escape from ill and qualify excuse.
Driven to answer, man confused, unnerved
Turned base upon his weaker charging her—
While she the serpent's guile denounced for all.
Thus through those frantic moments, when the might
Of Heaven seemed launched against them, their appeals
Showed how far selfish Satan had demeaned.
Now feeling so confronted both, sad hearts
Admitted Truth's conviction—charged, accursed
The grovelling medium of temptation fell.
In woman's breast an enmity supreme
Against the infernal token took its place,
To last through lengthened time. While she assumed
Her sorrows multiplied, desire bowed down,
Yet would her seed triumphant over self
By sacrifice eternal subjugate.
She chose the side of duty in that war
Begun for generations. Confident
Her future reached devoted but to Love.

The charge on Adam so effective smote,
That had not grace illumed her face beloved,
He single would have found despair too deep
For crushed hope ever to bear up again.

Unblessed the ground he knew must henceforth yield
To animated dust—its frivolous part—
What evil knowledge cruel thence might bring
Of trouble broadcast. But aroused in faith,
He rose a master above self and earth,
And calling Eve, his consolation now,
They took the covering of a beast late slain,
That rashly braved the ruling thunderbolt,
For coats to clothe their nakedness, and shield
The carnal frame, grown sensitive as frail.
Benign this symbol was of Friendship high,
Disposed to such protection; yet with woe
Convinced that banishment, from claims endeared
And long contrition following to the end,
Must try them—earthly charms, familiar ways,
Owned through a happy space had been renounced.
To trespass further would perpetuate
The infamous. Peace never could be theirs
Where testimonials of the past accused,
And only sorrow desolate remained.
Since they had severed from the Unity,
Rejecting service, to assume as gods
Themselves distinct and independent powers,
The province dark of self-sufficience chosen
Must bear them tribulations penitent;
But Mercy fostered still,—would yet redeem
The seed they scattered in the wilderness.
This new-found trust their spirits stirred again—
Resurgent waked with active principle

The dormant hearts, alive but in one aim—
Assistants bound toward that promise bright,
Distant but gracious as a light that cheers
Benighted fellow-travelers from far off.
The dim confinement, now their place of prayer,
Unlike that prospect, gloomier still became,
Until those eyes of beauty that had changed,
Filled with compassion for the doleful work,
But beamed a confidence so resolute,
Her mate the challenge of his manhood felt,
Though faith in such augmented strength increased.
On her his silent gaze pathetic bent
The deep emotions of a soul so full
Of feeling, like the troubled tide it welled
From agitated depths not reached before.
In that one look she read resolve that brooked
No law but Heaven's; no impediment
Could stay the edict in his mind confirmed.
Without a word she followed him—obeyed
Unquestioned his departing step, nor turned
Her mournful glance to cherished scenes resigned.
Reluctant as they passed the many points
In memory fixed, where thought would fondly grieve,
The sentence of each conscience now forbade
Their feet to linger; though they fled not like
Low criminals. Erect he strode, whose soul
Regenerate with godly confidence,
Scorned the dejection of a craven heart.
Her tenderness not only turned to him

Entire, but such a patient faith and firm
Shone from her spirit, meekly as she went,
That all her daughters since whose zeal in good
Hath made Earth wonder, might unite their beams
In glory contemplated, and not match
The grace which lit their mother's face that hour.

Awhile in solemn silence, like the cloud
Suspended over them, with steady pace
Obedient they crossed the favored vale,
On, to that passage which must soon shut out
The vision afterwards. Not until then
Did Adam's footsteps fail; but there he paused,
With eyes cast down and clenched hands statue-like.
Whatever were his feelings, gentle Eve
Permitted no relapse to pain him long,
But with the tenderest touch her hand was placed
On the bowed shoulders, while her humid eyes,
Perhaps from effort, radiant seeking his,
Expressed more courage still than these her words:
"Before us, dear, extends His faultless work
Who is our constant Father everywhere!
Is it not best to leave what we have passed
Submissively confided to the One
Our future so depends upon for grace,
Without Whose aid our struggle must be vain?
I knew not formerly, the eager force
Which moves me now to serve my God and thee,
And make such poor amends as one life may.

But if a natural doubt afflict thy mind
Of constancy in one who fell before,
Behold another nature inher breast,
Who is thy servant hence to that high Will.
Or, if the course we take confessing bends
The heart, that deems blest spirits here withdrawn,
Against man turned—believe they are like Him
From Whom they came—as kind, as pitiful.
Maybe upon this spot thy spirit sighs
A sad farewell in prayer to Paradise ;—
Oh, if it be so, let me join therein—
Let my devotion mingle trust with thine !"
So pleading soft, her lulling murmurs dropped,
Like balmy dew upon the drooping form;
And he not only solaced but revived,
With hopeful face and tongue, thus greeted her :
" My comfort ! were naught else vouchsafed me here
By lenient Heaven than thy stay on earth,
This thankful mind might range the bounty great,
But never sum its blessings. If I bowed
To Wisdom's providence in lighter needs,
What homage should the present manifest !
When peace from Justice hitherto involved
My soul's sure hopes given up, how may the thought
Appreciate His calm power left with thee !
Or shall a feeble faculty aspire
To estimate the ministry of Love,
Whose eloquent interpreter thou'rt made,
While what is deigned in thee surprises so ?

Shortly, the frowning gloom above impressed
My guilty sense, which pure had not known fear.
That angry Order banishing us hence
Would leave unbearable our separate doom.
Instead—ah, may such grace be merited—
One worthy purpose makes our lot the same,
One gracious Guide still leads forgivingly !
The superhuman forces that prevail
Over and near us, strike no more with dread ;
For Might divine protecteth where we tend,
And joining Love will light the solitude."
He spoke, the words of resignation mild,
Encouraged; but as melting minor key,
Breathed through some rich, deep melody, imparts
Its plaintive passion to the beautiful,
So touched his voice each sentence thus diffused,
Affecting though in hopeful language framed.
Bright, for all this, the eyes of either shone
With ardent hope reanimating them
For new and earnest efforts, which might show
Their fealty, sincerity to God,
And prove once more His children chaste and true.
Such motive urged them from the place they held,
Toward the prospect of that world unknown ;
So bravely side by side the two walked forth,
Trusting in Heaven's promise for their strength.

The clouds hushed overhead had meanwhile swelled
To huge proportions. Stillness hung between;

As when loud challenges have been exchanged
By glowering giants who imbibe the air,
Expanding monstrous for the onset close.
Nor distant were the pilgrims ere a flash
Quivered along the sky, reflected dull
But far, and of duration that announced
The strife of elements begun indeed.
Now through the trembling vault harsh uproar burst,
Rebounding over miles of altitude,
Till jarred from rest, the furthest regions rocked.
Darker the treacherous shadows fell athwart
Those anxious steps, persisting undismayed ;
And flesh soon found the need of covering,
Such chill embraces met it sensibly.
Still onward pressed the hopeful, while around
Besetting terrors gathered power and raged,
As though infernal furies battling, held
The time and place for wrath. Aloft, one stroke
Of fire tremendous tore the sky apart,
Rending apparently each jagged edge
Which gaped wide through the sundered firmament.
Then the rough discord broke on high, that racked
And smote so terrible the earth it shook :
Nor rattle of artillery, nor tones
From groaning brutes, nor crash by ruin brought,
Could rate at variance with those thunderous sounds.
A second and another bolt is hurled
Swift to the earth, with such astounding force,
It glances tearing from the ground a tree

Whose deep, strong roots avail not ;—on the gleam
Runs like a fiery serpent out of sight,
But leaves destruction crackling in its wake.
The eye inured to storm phenomena
May witness glowingly this play of light,
And ears familiar may be pleased to catch
From heaven's stupendous bell the mightiest peals;
But to the simpler, unaccustomed sense
These powers, though grand, are dreadful, and on some
Are even exhausting, while exempt from fear.
Eve felt no fright, although through nervous whirl
Involuntary tremors so convulsed,
She would have sank, but for the stronger arm
That clasped her swooning form and bore it on,
Easily as a father might his child.
Then, then if ever, man was made aware
Of what responsibility reveals,
When secret fountains of affection spring
To bless and dignify vicissitude !
From off her pallid face his fond eyes raised
With noble confidence their look to Heaven ;
And while he hastened o'er the dusky path
For place more sheltered, albeit night came on,
Mechanical his feet kept well the way,
Nor rested till the storm was far behind.

Gently the precious burden he reclined,
His powerful figure bending tenderly
And careful. Yet no fear nor doubt assailed

The faith of Adam for that life most dear:
As glowed the stellar signets of His peace,
Who drew the gloomy shroud from over them,
So would those lids concealing be withdrawn
At Mercy's clement choosing, and disclose
The light of joy their orbs long hidden kept,
To more serenely sparkle with his own.
Calm he reviewed the course they had pursued,
And saw the flaming swords of Heaven wave
Above lost Eden, pointed every way;
But on their new estate his thought now turned,
While hope and action reached in faith to God.

BOOK V.

An age of time, is as a molecule
To space, when reckoned with eternity—
The rise and fall of epoch, but the pulse
That stirs in eons of perpetual course.
One generation hurries to its end,
Scarce reaching which another is begun:
So swift the race, so constant living change,
Man feels the annual cycles passing by
Like transient sunshine crossed by hastening clouds.
For moons are only moments, days such mites
Their flight impresses not. Upon the field
Of life, to battle thro' a shifting hour,
And win fair honors of eternal state,
Or ignominious fall opposed to Heaven,
Each warrior takes his place;—a decade start—
Establishes and arms for this great chance.
Hence, tho' the genesis an era reached
Wherein men numerous spread out to tribes,
Those entered in the lists comparative
Were but the vanguard, and the action yet,
A passage only to the chronicles
Forever opened to recording Truth.
Thro' this first day of danger to His own,
From Hell's malignant fury, God had shown

Perennial grace; encouraging the just
By the same methods and experience
That nature furnished to dispirit sin.
The auspicious movements of the date involved
Were shaped by Providence. His flood-gates high
Renewed the seed of earth, and promise brought
To reassure His faithful. Now came on
Another day of conflict, as against
The fiend, Selfishness, and numbered dupes,
Arrayed the few souls grateful to their God.
The gracious stock of sturdy Abraham,
Tending their flocks and following duty's path,
Were marked for traitors by the evil one:
But from a seeming victory of wrong
Resulted triumph to that humbled youth
Who was his father's honor in old age,
And served his brethren with humanity.

The sons of Jacob—Reuben, Simeon,
Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun
In order came from Leah, wife unloved,—
Strong herdsmen, who avenged a sister's shame,
Upon her amorous prince and Shechemites,
Crippling by stratagem their trusted strength,
But foul in act and false before the Lord,
Stood trusty guardians over Israel's wealth.
While those from Rachel, fruitless long, tho' loved
As sole mate chosen by the patriarch,
Were Joseph, born midst tender prayers of faith,

And Benjamin, in bearing whom she died.
Four others cast from matrix spurious
Of Bilhah, handmaid to his favorite,
And Zilpah, servant of the first, were named
Dan, Napthali, Gad, and Asher, as they sprung
Thro' envious rivalry into the world:
Their dames were concubines on Jacob thrust,
Who more for peace than passion honored them.
Observance of the injunction to increase
Had not God's blessing, when defiled by spite
Of Satan, ever ready to infect
And curse the issue thro' maternal touch.
So these among the others brought their taint
To all but Joseph, gracious child of Love.
He, youngest next to prattling Benjamin,
And different from his elders, stood apart,
The target of their jests betimes, but bright
Beyond their reasons, bent on worldly things,
For out of infancy his soul emerged
To sing with nature and rejoice therein,
Following the Light that led above. His heart,
Too gentle for contentions which mere gain
Made those around him flush to wrestle in,
Turned from the common contest, but was stored
With fine affections and abilities
His brethren knew not of; the father even,
Shrewd in the laws of natural descent,
Guessed nothing of his son's communion wise,
Nor what grand proofs the future claimed of him.

Thus Joseph went alone with God, his Friend—
The youthful student Wisdom guided well.
Affectionate to all his relatives,
Servants alike, tho' others owned not such,
He notwithstanding lived in solitude,
Surrounded by them; for they answered not
Nor understood him more than did the trees
He loved to muse amongst. Often when tasks
Could be disposed of, would he stroll away
To some lone place of beauty, and discourse
On themes congenial to his salient mind,
With Love's true mediums of instruction found :
No snub nor ridicule distressed him there,
As things that could not comprehend his praise
At least assisted, never saddening him
With disappointment like his brethren dull.
Yet had he hopes to lift them from the depth
Of senseless greed they struggled in, and lead,
However harsh the favor might be met,
His kindred to the higher plane of Good.
This principle compelled him from the first
To offer counsel, while his seniors mocked—
Thence, from the field, he brought their bad report,
Determined but for benefit ; whereat
His sire, pleased with Love's blessing to the aged,
Bestowed a token dress of rainbow hues
Upon him, as of promise for respect.
Long before this, the spirit covetous
Had won the envious on that side opposed

To Justice, and they pointed spiteful taunts,
Like stinging arrows dealt against the lad.
So when they saw that Israel's preferment
Rested on him, they hated still the more
His ways, and never met him peaceably.
Stung once with their mean insults, he announced
By figure of a dream how he would rise,
And they in obeisance bend before him yet;
Which, when they heard, incensed to bitterness,
They jeered the visionary rule he claimed.
Not silenced by their anger—for his trust
Was with the Mightiest—he told them how
His parents, as the rest, would bow to him;
Hearing which Jacob spoke in mild rebuke,
Because he doubted his son's destiny.

The scanty confidence of age for youth
Distrusts great qualities, but not the will;
And therefore when his absent sons misgave,
The prudent father on his choice relied
For faithful service, sending Joseph forth
To Shechem, where the flocks were turned to thrive,
That he might learn if all went well; for there,
Passing discreet anxiety, the heart
Of Israel bent. Paternal thought for each,
Despite their failings, swayed the patriarch.
Obedient Joseph left the vale of home
And journeyed far, still blithesome as he went
Thro' many a scene delightful. Visions bright

Lit his fair countenance, inspiring too
That soul compliant but retentive stamped—
Truth's only partner in comparison.
If while the path stretched round obstructing hills,
His buoyant feet chose to ascend direct,
And cross exultant the uncommon course,
It was not strange ; nor was there waste of time
Nor negligence of duty, if he paused
Upon the height, and, scanning life below—
Like hives of humming insects—sang aloud :
" How small the things of earth, their fierce pursuits
Viewed with composure from this eminence !
Ah, so presumptuous, they permitted prove—
Grand Lord—thy patience to be infinite !
Few, truly, of the millions thus engaged
Know what they combat for, or knowing guess;
Whether the outcome sought so desperate,
Assumes to profit or betokens peace,
Stable beyond the moment's breath to last.
Persuaded by that imp of avarice,
Against the universal welfare drawn,
Mad, individualistic they rush on—
A cruel mob, but cruelest to themselves.
There move opposed to such a number true,
Valiant according to their difference,
Whose great achievements edify, and teach
Penicious traitors met at least a shame
Of self they never wholly can forget,
Beside respect for good felt, tho' disguised.

And I—what is my purpose 'midst the fray ?
Shall it be only to attest with them
That Justice leadeth me to peace secure—
That Wisdom hath made powerfulest mine arms;
Or Love imparted glory for this soul ?—
O Thou, in Whose sure battle faith prevails !
To these, my fellows, would I dedicate
The force of life Thou hast given, if it serve
Thy Will divine. Nor fear I to engage
Foes long advanced, but rather would that chance
Had shown me broader field than here surrounds ;
For thousands press afar, and brothers all
Appeal,—yea move Thy might within to hope !"
Thus rose to Heaven the vows of eager youth,
Before maturity had shaped the man ;
As from his childhood, rudiments of thought
Developed power surprising at such age.
While fancy traced fair pictures in his mind,
There was a government that soul pronounced
Over the idealistic images,
Which brought them into service practical ;
Distinct they stood for real prototypes.
But when a spirit generous and acute
Is classed with those whom selfish ends engross,
Who spare no time to study, hence are dull,
And care not to examine stranger things,
An effort is at once begun to crush
That which unknown to them humiliates.
The devil tortures from invidious breasts

Such blasts pernicious to fair character,
Only God's influence interposed can help
The soul assailed. Where virtue, talent, grace
Or other gift superior is remarked,
Satan directs the scandalous stings of hate
From wounded vanities in ambush close.
Yet dreaded not the son of Israel,
Who hastened on to meet his brethren harsh—
He resolute to conquer, would have faced
A world of enmity and ignorance.
Down from the steeps he hurried, bounding glad
And light as leaped the sanguine heart uncurbed;
His swelling nostrils drew the meadow's breath,
Ears tingled for sweet pastoral sounds addressed.
Bright foliage wove its beauties to attract
The passing favor of his glorious eyes.
These all received attention, for he went
By nothing without gaining valued thoughts;
Tho' mainly now his mind to prudence given,
Learned from the many sources measurement
And wise economy in nature shown.
Such formed, indeed, his principles of life
That after made him master over men
Years older than himself, and turned aside
Their barriers to friendly intercourse.

Arriving where his recreant relatives
Should be attendant, as their sire implied,
Joseph in search went wandering about;

Till meeting with a stranger, he was told
That those he sought had thence to Dothan gone.
Thither encouraged, for his heart at first
Had felt alarm, the youthful traveler urged ;
Being soon rejoiced to find them safe. But they
At sight of him conspired against his life,
Even before he reached them, and exclaimed
One to another : "See, this dreamer cometh !
Now, therefore, let us slay and bury him,
And say some beast devoured him. We shall see
What will become of his presuming dreams."
But Reuben, who while eldest, was constrained,
Yet really loved the youth, delivered him
Out of their hands, protesting : "Let us not
Murder him ! Shed no blood, but cast him down
Into yon pit, and spare all violence."
He spoke to rescue Joseph from their rage,
And bring him safe to Israel again.
So when their father's trustful light approached
With smiling face, affectionate thus greeting :
"All hail!" They mocked and stripped him of his garb—
The sight of which in favor angered them.
One scoffed him, saying : "Leavest now thine all?"
Another :—"Thou'lt have less to bear from this !"
He giving but the questions : "Is it wrong
To have pleased the sire who sent me here?—For what
Is this indignity?" And later on :
"What mean ye to inflict—what must I bear?"
Aloof stood Reuben, while the innocent

Was hurried down into the cistern deep,
Which by good chance was out of use and dry;
Else had the senior stayed his brethren's crime.
Now seeing their silent victim safe below,
Reuben departed, saying for excuse:
"I must attend beyond, but will return."
They, ruthless, turned to spread the daily meal,
And sat about, with words exculpate strained,
To fit complacent malice. Simeon thus:
"Who kindles fire-brands for his play should burn!
He that inflames to rage must be its prey."
"Sooth," added Zebulun, "as choice is there,
And ample warning, he within the pit
Is scarcely touched, so merciful our heat
Lapped o'er him." Levi of the oldest said:
"Reuben hath shown a woman's breast of fear,
And freed himself from us. How natural
A craven spirit from the firm retires!
That pest still threatens us—he traced us here,
And will as surely follow us back home."
In order to exalt himself, the third
Lost no occasion to decry their head,
Tho' never in his presence: so the next,
Named Judah, equally as envious proved
Of Levi, but straightforward at the least.
Between them often cross exchanges passed,
The gifted Judah winning victories
In argument his mind should have despised;
And now to antagonize, he thus began:

"What profit follows if we slay our kin?—
Are there who so lack memory, they want
Recitals of the past? Such could I teach
But for distressing others with the tale."
"Yea, please us!" all exclaimed, save Levi glum;
When Judah, flattered, loftily resumed:
"Ye know the story, but its points will bear
My repetition. When the sons of those
Whom envious sin cursed, humbled to distress—
Cain the first-born and Abel second, grown
To early manhood, chose distinct pursuits,
The younger seemed by Heaven favored most.
Like us, he kept fat herds, and offered up
In figure grateful what his life engaged,
And was successful as sincere in all.
Cain offered, too, the fruits he tilled to God,
But more as bidding than for Love's return;
The seasons threatening his greedy hopes
Frowned not on Abel's interests, and hence
Ungovernable spite, by Satan roused,
At last assumed to fury of revenge.
Not less had holy Wisdom counseled Cain
Upon his wrath and fallen pride; he knew
Acceptance was for virtue; that where aims
Fail oftenest, sin lieth at the door.
He saw how Abel loved him, let him rule;
But, being more powerful, he presumed thereon.
Haply to charge his brother in the field,
He urged for difference, while Abel true,

Pleaded tbe right, and would not yield to wrong;
Whereat Cain rose with angry, glaring eyes,
And smote his younger. Furious was the blow!
Crushed, writhing on the ground in agony
Of death, the groaning Abel lay; his blood,
From ears and mouth and nostrils bursting out,
As clutched the instinctive fingers on the sward
In last convulsion, seemingly to hold
Their grasp upon the earth, receding fast.
That pallor creeping o'er the rigid face,
Cast on the living terror's hue more wan.
The clouded orbs of sight reproachful set
Upon the murderer with agate stare.
Fear and remorse fell on the shuddering Cain:
Wild raving called he Abel's name, and sought
By kinder touch to save, or token meet
Of recognition, when no answer came.
Oh! question terrible for conscience then—
'Where is thy brother Abel?'—struck his soul.
He answering wailed, 'I know not, nor have kept!
The Spirit of his God accusing knelled:
'Thy brother's blood crieth even unto Heaven,
And every mouth of earth that drinks his life,
Takes up thy curse; henceforth it will not yield
To thee. A fugitive and vagabond
Despised, thou'rt doomed to wander all thy days.
Woe bowed above that victim—life prolonged,
Struck on the criminal a relentless scourge.
So, brethren, must it fare with those who kill,

Even tho' the blood incensing be concealed.—
Look ye ! From Gilead towards us come
Ishmaelite merchants, with their camel train
Bearing to Egypt spicery, balm and myrrh.
Let us sell Joseph to them, that our hand
Be not upon a brother—our own flesh."
Thus Judah, and the others were content.
They drew and lifted Joseph from the pit
As passed the Ishmaelites, so Judah hailed :
" What offer for a servant such as this ?"
" Ten pieces bright of silver !" shouted one.
" Double the number and secure a prize,
For he is young and strong !" said Issachar.
The selfish barterers closed the trade at that—
A conscious soul was bargained—they that bought
Led off the weeping youth to Egypt's mart.

When Reuben later to the place returned,
And found not Joseph, grieved he rent his clothes;
Sad to the unnatural ones he turned and mourned :
" The lad is gone ; I—whither shall I go !"
They answered but with winks and motions strange.
Issachar killed a kid, and in its blood
Bade Simeon to dip the exile's coat,
Accosting as it dripped, held up to view :
" O, bleeding proof of Jacob's loss ! How like
The favored flood dissembled is this dye !"
Sick at the sight turned Reuben, weak he reeled,
Swayed blindly, and fell swooning on the ground:

Astonished stood they over him—then fright
Drove each thought home. They had not dared to show
The endowment rich to Joseph's purchasers,
But sold him in the habit of a slave.
Prompted by Satan, these unfeeling rogues
Brought the stained garments to their father saying:
"This have we found; know now whether it be
Thy son's or not." Thus cruel they gave over.
Alas, too well he knew it! Loud he moaned:
"My son's—my Joseph's coat! An evil beast
Hath torn him—hath devoured the heart I loved!
Grieved Jacob wept, and went in sackcloth coarse,
Type of bereavement; nor, tho' all his sons
And gentler daughters strove to soothe his woe,
Would he be comforted, lamenting still:
"I will go down in sorrow to the grave,
Unto my son." Thus Israel mourned for him.
Dared those exultant at the wounds they showered
On him a captive made, have told the sire
Of all, tho' they should stand anathemas,
So smitten, either from remorse to escape,
Would now have breasted every consequence;
But for the coward influence of that imp
Long prostituting their low guilty wills.

The traveling traders into Egypt brought
Their goods and Joseph, who was sold at once
To Potiphar, a captain of the guard,
An officer in royal Pharaoh's trust.

Reduced to vassalage, still faith maintained
Its place in Joseph's breast; and Wisdom shed
Graces that haloed round him prosperous.
This saw his virtual master, in whose house
He faithful served—as with the Lord endowed,
All things were made to prosper in his hand.
So Potiphar gave Joseph management
Over the house and all he had beside,
Like to a friend, such confidence composed;
From which time Justice thro' that servant blessed
The Egyptian's interests, who knew not aught
Of his possessions save the bread he ate.
To manhood grown, well formed and favored too
With courteous port from virtue natural,
The son of Israsl stood a prince in truth;
Commanding honor and admired by all.
But Satan, who had tempted oft and failed,
Engaged the amorous wife of Potiphar
To cast her selfish eyes upon the pure
And noble Joseph, whom she thus addressed:
"If thou art in thy master's place, fulfil it!"
Not scorn but pity curved the honest lips
That answered her: "My master wotteth not
What I in keeping hold for him; none here
Exceed me—to my pleasure all is left—
He hath kept nothing from the charge but thee,
Because thou art his wife—the close estate
Beyond depute which Heaven consecrates."
Again the Devil urged her to attack,

With heat incestuous, glances, postures, feints,
And every artifice of beauty fierce
Against the servant guarded so in faith.
"Am I not even the property of him
Thou servest"—she asked, "as such enjoin I not
Thy free attention?"—"What!" he turning cried,
"Is sentiment, is principle unknown
To the vast volume of Egyptian creed,
That thou, one petted with advantages,
Come begging of the Hebrew? If his law
Can quit thy famine and begin new life,
Cherish it fully as he joyous gives.
Thou art not property in any sense—
Unless of Him the Israelite adores—
That God not represented by the beast,
But One controlling thro' uncarnate Love."
Thus glowingly he spoke, returning calm
To arrange accounts and papers of the liege.
Whereat she, like a siren touched to tears,
Began lamenting: "When the tender breast
Of woman is exposed to heartless man,
If he be only gallant she may hope;
But where he lacks brave courtesy—alas—
The wound too brutal cannot be survived!"
So plaintive, voiced the burning breath of pain;
Yet Joseph answered not nor viewed the woe.
This last rebuff incensed sin's abject dame,
Who desperate on the bondman flung herself
And grasped his skirt while, falling on her knees,

She implored: "Come, be not cruel"—But he heard
No more; for tearing loose, his vestment clinched
Still in her violent hands, he fled the place.
She stung with tortured pride arose and shrieked
For very vengeance: "Ho! shall I alone
Be left to insult? Servants—here—attend!"
Quick they surround her, but more swiftly yet
She summons evil thoughts to meet her rage;
As, aided by the demon, her false tongue
Plays a smooth perjurer to the tear-stained eyes.
"See!" said she to the wondering crowd about,
"Your master hath brought in a Hebrew here
To mock us; he, the knave, assaulted me;
And when I cried aloud for help he fled,
Leaving this evidence of guilt behind."
She held on high the robe from Joseph torn,
Full to the knowing gaze of those around,
Then, dropping it disdainful, reached her hands
Toward a waiting-maid who helped her thence
Away. Her feigned fatigue drew sympathy,
In looks and woeful nods from all she passed.

Joseph, convinced his presence must inflame
The malady he could not cure within,
Shunned for a time the mansion of his friend,
And studious strolled Egpytian thoroughfares.
Of her whose contact he so late escaped,
He only thought in pity. Not distressed
By conscience, further plotting on her part

Disturbed no fancy of the faithful one;
Who, gathering knowledge as he went along,
Scarcely was conscious of the passing hours,
Till evening's flashes signalled from the west.
Provided with sweet fruits he made a meal,
And sauntered on regardless where he laid
Himself for sleep beneath that clement sky,
Soon kindling the bright beacons of his trust.
It was a night so clear, albeit the moon
Glanced but in profile, objects were distinct
For miles: the scene as beautiful and calm
As ever tropic deigned to traveler.
Freed of the cumbrous robe that state prescribed,
In simpler wrap his light step took its way,
While varied thoughts engaged him. Now he paused,
Where fragrance haunted a luxuriant spot
Embowered by spreading palms, an ambient frame,
Fringing the mild magnificence beyond.
Such picture would have courted careless eyes;
And his—they were companions to the soul
That thus surprised the slumbering echoes there:
"O state serene! Hath Heaven not indulged
This clime salubrious and all whom chance
Gives here a habitation—nay, false clause—
Accident but appropriates and loans
That which kind Providence for need intrusts!
I am affected by rank errors round,
Flaunted with such pride here they drug the mind
And prostrate it. Ye stars, that influence not

Sparks nearest even from peculiar laws,
How might an unlearned tongue like mine gainsay,
Fearless of ridicule, their arrant lies,
So palpable but hedged mysterious.
Scholars in cycles, dunces tho' in sense,
A single center for the whole must serve
To make one stupid principle agree,
Or suit their blind assurance specified.
Effects are mixed with causes : things are placed
Beyond the realms they move within ; yet all
This monstrous stuff is taken at a gulp
By the poor multitude. Oh, were I trained
To meet the treacherous number in that field
Exclusively their own, no magic air
Would turn my purposes aside from them !
But what avails a wish without its means,
Essentials to designs ? Forever so
Are reasons shaped—there is a choice of mind.
The needy brain will sluggish plod along
Thro' tedious systems fashioned by the slow,
And gain at length position, tho' not strong ;
But intellect that greets the rapid ray
Of natural inspiration, soaring straight
To highest Truth, disdains all branching schemes
Below, the which enfeeble or ensnare,
And only lead to points inferior.—
No, might this heart as yonder envied star
That now seems warmly throbbing nearer him
I mourn, bereft ere yet my mind had learned

The fullness of a father's intercourse—
Fond sire, could thy son's figure likehis soul,
Haste to that orb his exiled eyes behold,
Shedding soft lustre still within thy range,
How soon were added from my happiness
The radiance of affection to its beams—
Not here one moment, tho' ambition high
And bright attracted as this brilliant field,
Nor even if glory waited with a crown,
Would Joseph languish absent from thy sight!
Ah, wherein is my duty—to remain
And be the bondman thro' an age prescribed,
Of one who, while my friend, is master still,
Made so by kindred cruel, whom, for all,
The banished heart forgives; or break away
From every obligation here imposed,
And reach and rest upon my father's breast?
Such breach unlawful were; but would the flight
Be followed and fresh misery entailed?
Why do I measure from a worldly scale,
When moral agents are within to guide
In doubts like these—sly demon, art thou nigh
To take advantage of a moment weak?
Now tho' the habits of my heart give way
To saddest of desires—tho' from both springs,
Whose depths reflect no longer pictures dear,
Shall burst salt torrents till their founts be dry,
Yet will I stand unselfish to the pledge

And serve my fellow man.—More, I dare cross
Satanic ends—high Heaven, record the vow !
As every breath of waiting ones on earth
Draws nearer the great Father's audience,
It shall be cheer while time delays to know
Each step I take leads nearer him who, next
To God, was honored guardian of my life.
So kind the night for play of tenderness,
I will go on at least a little way
Toward that spot endeared ; for sleep more sweet
Will there be mine and fit me to return."
Thus Joseph gave the changes of his soul
To evening silence as he wandered far,
Thoughtless of malice on his upright course.

Affairs had meanwhile crowded and compelled
The generous Potiphar to visit home,
For new instructions in his sovereign's plans,
Ere entering on an expedition long.
No dark forebodings of the storm so close
Upon his peace of mind admonished him :
Such was his trust in Joseph, he believed
The fates secured his place from evil power,
And turned their favorite to good alone.
Surprise was therefore spread on every line
Of those brave, open features, when vague news
Crossed the unwelcomed soldier in his hall.
" Where is my faithful Joseph ?" he inquired ;
" His lips are wise and to the point direct—

Ye mumble meaningless—go, call him here !"
" He is escaped, sir !" two at once replied.
" Escaped"—said Potiphar, " escaped from what ?
Met he an accident—was he confined ?"
" Nay, lord, but fled ; our mistress can explain !"
One bolder than the others last rejoined.
" How fled," asked Potiphar, " why should he fly,
Secure in service ?—bid my lady come !
Something amiss awaits me here, instead
Of welcome manner always met before . . .
Gone !—doubtful word, but bodied with distress;
The breath of trouble utters it—or worse,
There comes a scent of evil from the sound.
Why tarries she ?—Speak, is your mistress ill ?
What chamber lies she in ?—Ye shake your heads,
And stare at me like sheep whose tongues are staid.
This is insufferable mystery ;
Slaves, answer me ! or by—ha, so ye point !"—
He turned abrupt, when feeble there appeared
His wife, as leaning on her maids she came.
Who would have guessed that artifice rehearsed
So strict—dependence of those failing feet,
The head which like a flower drooped on its stem,
Dark circles round her half-hidden orbits drawn,
And trembling mouth, whose motion failed of speech—
Who could have thought these, efforts of a part
The Devil trained her to impersonate.
Astonished first, the gallant husband helped
His charge as gently as a courtier might

To cushioned seat, composing with these words
"Forgive, if I disturbed my lady weak!
They told me not, or I had sought thee soft
As breeze, scarce flurrying tho' my anxious breath
Should hang upon thy trouble. Rest awhile,
And prove my patience abler now to bear
Suspense than thou to hurry thro' accounts."
Thus he, to whom she sighed with artful feint:
"Ah, I am ill indeed who cannot show
My joy in thy return, that makes the heart,
Like a penned bird to flutter, as its sun
Grand, genial comes again assuring strength,
For want of which it were a perished thing.
But am I safe from insult now, with thee,
True champion, near me; say thou wilt not leave
Thy ward again exposed to dread assault!"
Her eyes implored him as the words appealed,
And ill forced shudders shook her figure frail.
Struggling like one who battles with himself,
The officer impatient but discreet,
To question thus in puzzled accents broke:
"Then thou art injured?—Crime, I may not ask
How, lest it fret the wound I would have healed.
Yet thou couldst say who dared to bring thee harm,
Without reflecting on its injury.
O, I will hold the chargers of this breast
Obedient to discretion—have no doubt—
Tell me, that from the name, I may inhale
What savor my revenge must urge upon."

"Altho'," she murmured, "my poor powers be racked
By violence, still I vigor take from thine.
That Hebrew servant thou hast given place
Came in to mock me." "Who!" cried Potiphar,
"Not Joseph surely?" "Aye!" she answered meek,
"And as I cried aloud for help, he left
His garment in my struggling grasp, and fled."
Astounded stood the master, while his face
First mortified changed to resentful pride;
But then incredulous turned thus his thoughts:
"Art thou quite certain he encompassed wrong—
Might not some worthier aim have been the view?
Him had I left my very life to keep—
Nor apt to be mistaken!" Deep he spoke.
"Alas!" wailed tremulous the consort false,
"Am I so doubted? Ask these servants all—
Question them separately of what they saw—
How found me situate as the scamp ran out—
Speak up, good vassals, fear not open truth!"
"Then do they know as much!" the proud man groaned:
"This scandal every wind must sport. Ye Shades!
To have our privacy dragged thro' the dregs
Of commonplaces, bearing as it goes
All foul additions the low train sticks on—
To hear one's title as a jest pronounced,
Or prestige questioned;—by the beak of Thoth!
There are no shafts in battle sore as these.—
Where is the miscreant—hunt him thro' the realm—

Trace, tho' your search to puppets' ears extend,
So small an imp eludes ! But bring him here
Untouched, for me to crack. Go, tho' the night
Folds to defer my vengeance—off, I say!"
Thus raved the soldier, pacing hurriedly
Like some fierce animal that keeps his lair,
And wounded, howls for furious revenge.
Those who remained around him wished they too
Might be ordered thence to shun the sufferer's rage;
For there were moments when his features dark
Swelled nigh to bursting, as the hot blood surged
Thro' channels flooded from the storm within.
Now busy Satan lashed the waves of pride
Till their upheavals deafened sense itself,
Drowning the voice of reason. Were it not
For such, the soul tormented might have marked
An exultation, touching on desire,
In that unworthy woman, ere to brave
The violence of her husband's mood, she said:
"Why should my noble condescend to kill
A miserable serf, whose blood would stain
Arms far less dignified than thine, dear lord!
Leave me the punishment of such a wretch,
And thou'lt have pay immediate, and long
As I can tax his life. Him would I make
The never rested victim of my whims—
No hound more piteous than this one I claim."
Facing the wench with penetrating eyes,
He paused, who wont to fathom deeper plans

Of plotting enemies, sharp insight owned.
What seemed composure settled on the man,
As quelled, these tones escaped his sapient lips:
"How, modest matron, if I made him thine
Wouldst thou avenge his present impudence?
By making him do service even to slaves,
Or fold with brutes more honest than himself?"
"No," answered the deluded, "were his weight
"Made legal property of mine, a chain
Would fasten him within my easy reach,
That I might goad him constantly and break
His vulgar pride. But he should still endure;
For tact dissuades from canceling all at once."
Straight as she argued, the commander's brow
Severe perplexed, his thoughts vehement breathed
And muttered thus, yet passed inaudible:
"Curses upon the judgment that takes strength
From partial circumstance, and mates the like
With criminal presumption! Wit, thou dupe,
Prone ever to associate and accept
Guilt fitted thro' thy exercise alone;
What mischief struggles from the tolerance!
I had condemned him, innocent perhaps,
On the mere version of a ravished cloak:
But if this harlot, fostered by my state,
Whose rash hot tongue still testifies her sin,
If she in dalliance defeated him—
Osiris! can I see and let her live—
Was he not villainous to hold from me,

Who put him in position? Had he fled
Before the outrage—ha! he might have so,
Nor prove they different who saw him out
In haste—O lightnings! had ye crossed their sight,
Or thundered till their ears were blocked to sound,
Safe thenceforth from her more pernicious noise,
That now finds ready echo everywhere,
Increasing the dread clamors of my shame—
Abomination—vengeance must be felt!"—
Here he was interrupted by dispatch,
Returned from hunting Joseph, to announce
How a detachment, finding him abroad
An hour before, had made him prisoner,
And brought him subject to his post again.
"Order him hither, but without the guard,
And say reward will follow!" bade the host.
Then, turning to attendants, : "Ye may go.
Prepare the details for my speedy start."
She, who throughout complacently reclined,
Nursed by her patient maid, now left alone,
Essayed to wile, beginning : "My fond prince"—
"Peace!" he exclaimed, and silenced the false mouth
Which for the first time twitched from doubt and fear.

Expectant Joseph entered and advanced,
Pale, still with confidence toward his friend;
But checked by peremptory wave of hand,
He stood aback, dejected, hurt in look.
"Vassal," spoke Potiphar, whose dignity

Was colder than his chilling sentences,
"Accused of act too infamous for name,
Make answer—but expect no lenience.
This woman will confront thee. Let replies
Be brief as pertinent. I have not time
To trifle even with small particulars:
So, madam, to the charges, and have done."
"What may I say in modesty, my lord,
That is not told already?" whined the dame;
For Joseph's honest eyes confounded her.
"Speak, or thy tongue twist withered to its roots!"
The husband's voice commanded, as his frown
Bent threatening upon her. Startled thus,
Tho' Satan aided, she moaned piteously:
"Friendless am I then—rude his insult came,
But pained me not as thy harsh manner hath."
The impatient soldier trenched his tightened palms,
And bit the lip that uttered: "Jade, I swear
Thou shalt speak soon, or never more have breath
To mutter syllable—say quick, the whole!"
His actress needed no pretension now,
For trembling weakness, terror geniune,
Her frame convulsed and beat the chattering teeth,
Thro' which these broken falsehoods low escaped:
"The man approached me, claiming in thy place,
The right to represent thee. I denied:
Whereon he seized to throw me:—but I grasped
His robe to stay my falling, and cried out,
There being none near, for help. Ere they arrived,

He frightened tore away, leaving that still
Clutched in my quivering fingers, and was gone."
She sighed, while questionable tears fell clear
Of cheeks, that hid from cowardice, not shame.
Indignant as the glance of Joseph burned,
For moments mute his tongue remained, as tho'
It might not parry her insidious charge.
The color mounting to his youthful brow,
And gleam distressed, depicted in that gaze,
Implied confusion; but when Potiphar
Turned on him silent scrutiny, his soul
Arose above all wounds, delivering thus:
"I am not guilty, nor have ever been,
Of thought against thee, whom I love as friend;
Unless that wandering from thy house to-night
Thro' outer district lonely, this heart longed
To be again where distant kindred drew
Affection, as the magnet doth its own.
I passed those confines only for the whim
Of coming nearer to my home apace,
But here resolved with daylight to return."
"Why forth unsent," the Egyptian coldly asked,
"Should a true servant choose to take his way?
Had some mad hungry beast prowled thro' these halls,
Thou couldst not have fled thither at more speed.
Answer her calumny if such it be,
And shift on nothing else to dodge the point—
Was wish adulterous from thy master held?"
To this the bondman bowed, but spoke no word.

"How so?"—the pent breath of the warrior gasped—
"Mysterious Memnon! still he answers not—
Standing like one afflicted in the front.
What if they, cozened thro' my self esteem,
Connive here yet—dread Furies—to be known!
She, guessing my discretion, may have dared
For closer plans this hard extremity.
Her eye roves fearful of encountering his,
Reproachful for a slave on lady cast;
Nor likely such contempt, unless that lust
Had lowered her in relation to the dog.
Curse them—one action of my ready arm
Would lay their entrails loose upon this floor,
That betters might sweep fulsome to the swine,
A mass corrupt for profit! And what then?
I would be dubbed a butcher, who had slain
His favored heifer when another crossed.
Pride, tyrant over bravery itself,
Whipping the wrath it urges yet controls,
Hath hemmed me in, and tortures from all sides!
Mine is a temper tho' to never fail
In such cross service: I must calmer view
Positions, even as the strait demands.
If reason be not given for the flight,
Stands not a culprit here in common law?"
This heard the Hebrew who at once spoke up:
"Does fair defense require me to accuse
Another? Punishment I have not claimed,
Nor merited—I plead no person's ill.

And was one guilty would it lessen crime
If any more were drawn into the case?
It is my people's horror to he judged
By fallible tribunals, or endure
The clouded character of legal tests.
Full my report is at thy hand; but thoughts,
Beliefs and principles are all my own,
Sacred as thou hast left them in the past."
He spoke, respectful, while his mild tones warmed;
But Potiphar, who seemed on course resolved,
Strode to the doorway, shouting: "Ho—without!"
Then lofty an obedient thus addressed:
"Take this man hence, and let the prison locks
Secure him from escape, till bondage pay
Complete in time the measure he would shun.
Give inquiry no more than that, accused,
From his own lips conviction qualified—
Yes—thou canst say his effort to evade,
Was first ill judged—mistaken, misconstrued,
For insane violence, he employed su h means.
Enough—no truant tongue can find appeal,
Where right commands. My sufferance tires—away!"
Bold as the speaker closed, he could not look
In Joseph's face, so steadfast, innocent,
It flung back every charge intensified.
The feal nature sentenced, felt withal
More noble pity for the other's state,
Than sadness from the prospect to be met;
And tho' arresting hands were on him laid,

Joseph's regard, in that brief moment, fixed
Upon the sufferer, compassionate.
No protest came from him; his only sign,
By motion of the head, misgiving told.
So he was led away to prison cell,
A guitless victim of necessity:
But hopeful thro' his faith in One above,
Who measures triumph to the spirit brave.
As storming wrath subsided, Potiphar,
Alone with his excited mistress found,
Eyed her askance before resuming thus:
"I shall commit thee to the care of those
Who keep asylums fitting. There thy parts
Must find the quiet of repose they need.
My future in this exploit may be summed—
The total of ambition. What repute
Hath folded in reserve, will soon appear;
But not the subject, who forever leaves
All, as his life, devoted to the state.
I go, however, circumspect. Thy needs
Will be directed first. The sight of man
Shall never more distress thee; for, save those
Who may attend my orders indirect,
Thou'lt meet with none—thy sex can minister.
Have heed thy tongue sustains no evil thought,
If thou wouldst shun more rigor of thy watch:
Counsel might hold me but for lack of time,
My monarch's will permits no more ado."
So saying, the captain crossed his floor in haste,

Yet not before the woman reached and clasped
Her bare arms firm about him, and thus wept :
" Can pride, my lord, in duty scrupulous
To King, allow thee to desert thy wife,
Much more dependent on thy service kept ? "
Sobs choked her further utterance, when he,
Insensible to pity, caustic sneered :
" Fame asks not of the valiant other faith
Than patriotic action ;—tho' a troop
Of sore-pressed weaklings claim his arm to save
From veritable death their helpless lot,
To be a hero, in the cant of life,
Man needs but serve his country. Such is made
The tenet strong of rule—its only guard.
Hard falls the stroke that separates bound hearts;
But on the loveless, death a blessing draws."
Casting her from him, with these words he dashed
Out thro' the passage, followed by her wail.

Confined to dismal and unhealthy cell,
Among coarse men of weak or vicious type,
In foulest durance, Joseph passed the time :
Still God was gracious and sustained him there,
Who never failed. The keeper well observed,
And placed his trust upon the Israelite,
Giving him management of all they did.
So prudent was the servant, that success
Betokened a continuance benign,
While the head guard looked not to anything.

About this time, on treasonable charge
Against the king of Egypt, there were two
Imprisoned—one chief butler to the king,
The other his chief baker—to await
Investigation which might fix the offence.
Consigned to Joseph's ward, one morning both
Were found with faces sad, of whom he asked:
"Wherefore look ye so dolefully to-day?"
They answered: "We have dreamed, and there is none
Here to interpret it." "True," Joseph said,
"Interpretations rest alone with God!
But, if it please you, tell me. Often forms
Direct the keen mind to what lies beyond."
The butler, awed at mention of the Lord,
Was of such jovial temperament, his sounds
An instant afterward, thus merry rang:
"My dream behold—a vine before me spread;
And on it branches three; there buds appeared,
Blossoms shot forth; thereof the clusters brought
Ripe grapes to view. My hand held Pharaoh's cup:
I took the grapes and pressed them into it,
Giving thus cordial to my sovereign proud."
Loud rolled his laugh and shook his jocund frame,
At thought of tender so inadequate;
But Joseph, weighing his manner free, observed:
"If right I judge, the branches mean three days;
Within which space shall Pharoah lift thee up,
Restore unto thy place, and thou shalt serve
After the manner thou didst heretofore.

But think on me when it comes well with thee—
Make mention of my keeping to the king;
For I indeed was spirited away
Out from the land of Hebrews: nor have here
Done act to warrant this imprisonment."
The irreverent baker, when he heard that good,
Promised one simpler, vain to Joseph said:
"I also dreamed—three baskets graced my head;
And in the uppermost, for princely choice,
All manner of fresh baked designs reposed;
Which birds flew envious on and fearless ate."
"In three days," Joseph warned, "the king will take
Thy head from thee, while hung upon a tree,
Vultures shall eat the flesh from off thy bones."—
"False conjurer!" hissed the sullen man enraged,
"But for my present check, the meal announced
Might pass on thee, and teeth instead of beaks
Nip off thy meat distasteful. He, not I,
At whom thy dark prediction aims amiss
Was guilty of sedition; from his mouth
Issued the words that most incensed our king!"
"But," laughed the other, "first thro' thy discourse,
I learned what seemed jest only—waggish ruse,
Not contemplating mischief in the fun."
Blandly the latter spoke, nor guessed even yet
His fellow meant intrigue against their lord.
"Henceforth," advised the Hebrew, calm in tone,
"Let no wild trip of humor snare thy way;
For thou art easy taken. Some need a stamp

Of hard experience to impress them right,
And after are so soft the mark soon wears.
This villain duped thee—nay, thou rogue, be still,
Or I may deem it best to straighten thee—
A wretch that hath no reverence for God
Respects not, values not a lord of earth!"
Emphatic Joseph uttered the last clause,
Doubtless because of his conviction sure;
And careless turned to leave them. As he went
The maddened baker raised in both hands high
A loose huge stone that would have struck him dead;
But like a watch-dog quick the butler sprang
Upon the scoundrel, fastening him down,
Wrathful, but foiled beneath superior strength.
Admonished by the scuffle Joseph viewed
Their settled posture, ordering thus his friend:
"Good butler, harm him not; yet keep control
Till I bring hither more security."
This said, the gracious guardian hurried off,
While they still struggled on the dungeon pave.

The third day following, as a birthday feast
Of him who ruled in Egypt, all were called,
His prisoned servants with the rest, to join
In festive showings custom long confirmed.
Before the number vindicated there,
Fun's heedless subject passed. Restored to trust
And service by his King, the man of mirth,
Indulging nature, courted many a smile,

With droll report or gesture comical.
Not so with him who had been traitor proven—
He was led out to penalty of death,
A dire example for the others shown.
Yet Joseph was forgotten by the one
Whose reinstatement he relied upon :
A guiltless heart still languished thro' neglect,
But never sank from confidence in Heaven.

BOOK VI.

Two full years passed and bounteously supplied
An active million's needs, when Pharoah dreamed—
He stood beside the Nile and witnessed thence
Seven sleek fat kine that, issuing from the brink,
Came up and fed upon a meadow by:
But seven ill-favored, lean brutes followed these,
And straight devoured them. So the king awoke.
Again he slept and dreamed the second time
That seven good ears of corn crowned one rich stalk;
When, a like number of thin husks sprung up,
Sapping all virtue from the others' rank.—
His dreams so troubled, that, when morning came,
The ruler called astrologers around,
And told them vividly; but none were there
Who could interpret right or satisfy.
Above them centered in their magic ring
The voice of a Rameses then reviewed:
"Your poor conjectures clash, however wise
Their sum; besides a grave solemnity
Surrounds the sacred waters of my dream,
Unusual, save on broad significance.
That stream which flows not for a dynasty
But the whole nation, or, perhaps, the world,
Hath spirit moved but to the general good.

Ye look not into nature candidly,
For doubt precedes, and merits more distrust.
To-morrow mocks the knowledge of to-day
Only where learning turns unnatural,
From its simplicity, to light conceit.—
I would there were a man in all the realm,
Versed in true principles, who might possess
Such points of alchemy and planet lore
As haply would direct him to great truths,
Nor claim his lifetime with their evidence.
But this ideal for the human mold
Is much too finely featured." As he spoke
And sadly cast his cheerless glance about,
The humerous butler near, in humble tone,
Thus serious said: "I recollect my faults—
Our king was angry with his servant chiefs,
And put me, with the baker, under guard.
One night we both dreamed strangely, he and I;
There with us, a young Hebrew, who had charge,
Interpreted our dreams. As he foretold,
It came to pass; me he restored to place
By prophecy, but the chief baker doomed."
"Good!—Have him brought before us," bade the prince,
"And let your harps in chorus count the steps
Toward his entry; from most lowly source
The purest fountains have been known to spring!—
Relax sage seniors from your strained pursuit,
While music recreates the measured pulse—
No other spell can charm away as well

The gloom of failure, or unsocial mood.
To amuse us, bring the South's dark dancers out,
Whose antics spirited instruct the play
Of fancy. Have recourse to every art
That lightens the formality of court;
So our strange visitor may warmly meet
With kind impressions, pending his response."
Even as he ordered was the king obeyed.
And soon from sober elegance, the scene
Was changed to joyous revel. Lutes and shells
From distant wilds were touched by wizard hands;
Their sweet notes tremulous appealing raised
To native feeling, that fantastic drew
A train of quaint performers into dance.
After each figure intricate was woven,
Some juggler of their number would in turn
Display illusions to surprise the rest,
Till timed by music, motions were resumed.
The sight flashed curious as its varied groups,
In numerous costumes from as many lands,
Joined or responded to the merriment.
Students, by virtue of their titled birth,
Robed for the ministry or corps renowned,
Enlivened where they mingled with the learned;
Tho' every class was definitely drawn.
The light-skin Northerner, the swarthy slave,
And Asia's captive lithe—or great or mean—
All castes and natures in that medley met.

Those sent for Joseph brought him hastily
Out of the dungeon: having shaved, and changed
His raiment, now he came before the king,
Who thus with pleasant grace acquainted him:
"I have dreamed what none here can explain to me:
But say they of thee, thou canst understand
A dream to interpret it." The voice fell kind,
Which Joseph answered, saying: "Praise not mine—
God shall give Pharoah a reply of peace."
Whereon the sovereign thoughtfully returned:
"Dreaming I stood upon the river's bank;
Up from the tide came seven well-favored kine,
And fed upon a meadow: then, behold,
Seven other kine came after them; lean-fleshed,
Such as I never saw in all the land
For badness. These, ill-favored, ate the first;
Yet when they had finished, it could not be known
That the fat seven had been devoured by them,
For they were still ill-looking. So I awoke.
Another dream then followed, as I slept—
Before me seven good ears of corn grew fair
On one rank stalk. Next the same number, thin,
As blasted from the east, sprung up beside:
The latter wasteful on the former preyed.—
I told magicians, but none clear explained."
To this the humble auditor rejoined:
"God hath shown Pharoah what must soon be done!
Believe the healthy kine and corn to mean
Seven plenteous years at hand. Thy dream is one.

The cattle lean and seven empty ears
That came up after them shall represent
As many years of scarcity. By exchange
Doth Heaven measure ; as an instrument
My thought is given thee—thine used for all.
Behold, there cometh seven bounteous years
Throughout the land of Egypt, followed by
An equal period of dearth and want.
So grievous famine must consume the yield,
Excess will pass forgotten. Therefore, seek
A man discreet and wise, on whom bestow
Charge and discretion over all the land.
Let Pharaoh assume, as on its soil the State
Depends, being first custodian of right.
Appointing officers to take up at least
One-fifth of Egypt's area. Have the fruit
Of those good seasons gathered carefully,
And kept in cities under royal seal.
This food shall be in store, against the years
Of famine, that the country perish not."
He moved sincerely as the subject called;
At which the monarch taken, yet not firm,
Thus to his retinue respecting spoke :
" His scheme is good and practical, methinks,
Likely to benefit ; for though it press
Subjects more loyal to a selfish rule
Than true to mine, who hold as property
Resources of the general domain,
Their cry for personal but unsound claims

Must trivial be against the nation's plaint!—
What say you, counselors, speaks he not well?"
If there was one among that courtly throng
Frightened in greedy guilt, he kept his peace;
Tho', like some moderns, fainly would he class
The common truth as schism impertinent;
Treating it as chimerical or false.
But when authority pronounced that way,
No envious sophist dared to contradict
With his pet term, 'impracticable,' mouthed
Against the sanctioned plan. Nor ever since
Has crownless critic chosen to oppose
A high or popular antagonist.

Forth from the numbers stepped an aged man,
Near relative to Pharoah, Nepheth called;
Who thus advanced with venerated sound:
"Of all convictions which a lengthened life
And calm pursuit have led me to, not one
Is more decided than the principle
At present in thy pleasure, worthy prince!
There may be privileges shown the few
In lines of honor—temples may be raised
For brave or brilliant favorites—or wealth
From every realm revert to titled hands,
And still no shock of policy ensue.
But the least method of the universe
Whose system we enjoy, demands respect;
And whether it be element, or that

Which all things animate exist upon—
The sacred soil—such being our common good,
Is of the province under government.
Long have I wavered cowardly between
A siege of friendships and the call of right;
As while intelligence had due regard,
And strong ambition merited high place,
It yet was constant that a limit strict
Should measure this of all necessities,
Lest the whole outgrowth prove of hollow stem,
To weighty fall, or crumble at a blast!
State is dependent on its members' strength,
Whose mass relies most surely on the land:
Hence where an individual usurps
Control, for selfish purposes, of more
Than the community can safely spare—
No matter what possession may presume—
Such will should be restricted by the law.
In clearest logic, public prudence pleads
Some primary reservation; granting thence
Whatever rights are consonant. The choice
Of persons must not jeopardize a State."
"Would'st thou, grave Nepheth," asked the troubled king,
"Have titles broken—is no sanctity
Attached to deeds of old or contracts since?"
"By thine integrity, true prince, I vow
My reverence," replied the sage, "for all
Who justly have acquired and value given.

But those whom greed hath drawn to risk their weight
On the loose ends of law, who knowing seized
That subject to reform, need not expect
Their claims to stop the progress of mankind,
Or slow advancement to conditions new.
Time will unfold the spectacle of Earth
Deranged by her great issue, in the throes
Of this same warfare, when her face will blush
With blood of kindred deluged, and the sky
Tremble from groaning tumult of their wrath.
Then brothers shall not recognize, nor sex
Restrain a portion. Few can be exempt;
And they may bless a government more sound,
Warned by impending horrors ere they fall,
To act judicious and avert the doom."
His solemn sentence had a power that hushed
The place as it were vacant. Pharaoh's self
Deep thought possessed, before he thus found voice:
"Yet by such principle, I might estrange
A loyal body of nobility;
Lay my house subject to the craven horde
That hath not blood deserving of our throne;
And, for the recompense, perhaps expire
Half conscious of a people's gratitude,
Long after prosperous, but selfish too.—
There should be others, in your proud array,
Familiar with this theme. Let them come forth,
Fearless of censure, tho' to manners strange,
Or contrary to views already taken."

For all, no answer followed; sadly then
Their sovereign broke the silence with these words:
"Whether from fear or indolence of mind,
Your cautious silence painful is maintained,
It must afford the commonest stranger here
A sense of satisfaction only passed
By our humiliation. To abide
Therewith in peace, is trial worth respect."
Suppressed as flowed his feeling, not a tone
Escaped the mark of Joseph, who to meet
And fill the occasion, modestly commenced:
"Ah, ruler proud as generous! believe,
If yet no other, one is here concerned
More for good bearing in thy will to man,
Than aught beside. If thou art pleased to hear
From all, thy servant honored, will obey.—
Would it be difficult to apportion fair
Amounts of ground sufficient for the needs
Of separate families—the rest reserve
To be a general margin provident?
While Satan's greedy hosts should be restrained,
Property must have a permanence secure,
Lest human aspiration leave the earth.
Some personal ambition is required
To stir true energies; domestic love
Points out fidelity for God or king,
And binds the best defenders to their realm.
A balance simple but sustained aright
Between the sum and units of our world,

Might be established for posterity;
Yet the selection of a governor
To adjust the present—an inspecting mind
Whose public friendship can surmount the mass
Is no light duty. Thought, majestic prince,
Thereon is safest, where so much pertains.
There waits at least the fair plan, to require
Of each one holding area, such a part
Of produce as another would renounce
For the like privilege. Creative force
Claims ratio of all stewardship assumed."
The Hebrew's manner, gracious as it came
To all, pleased Pharaoh most; who turning said
Unto his servants: "Can we find, as this,
A man in whom the breath of Wisdom moveth?"
And then to Joseph: "Forasmuch as Heaven
Hath shewed all this to thee, none being so wise,
Thou shalt be master of my house—thy word
Shall rule my people: only in the throne
Will Pharoah reign. Behold, I thus exalt
Thee over Egypt and our land throughout!"
The monarch took a ring from off his hand
And placed it potent on the Israelite;
Silent, though rapid thoughts took way in him
To glory ardent. Naught resembling pride
Affected, but the dignity of power:
Responsible he found the valiant heart,
True in reliance Supernatural.
At Pharaoh's will procession grand was formed,

And, to the sound of timbrels, marching forth
The brilliant congregation chanted praise,
Filling the hall with notes to Joseph hailed.

In vestures of fine linen robed, and borne
Aloft on chariot, second to the king's,
Lauded, paid homage as a guardian
Of public interest, that worthy light
From Israel taken, calmly met the throng.
Men sullen or rebellious touched no more
God's faithful agent, than the flattering shouts
That rose from multitudes in loyal tone.
He felt divine Authority within,
Joined by the actual force of Pharaoh's will,
Which all must needs submit to ; so he looked
With eagerness to duty, confident
Of final triumph when the moment came.
Given the title, Zaphnath-paaneah,
At thirty he was wed to Asenath,
The daughter of a priest in high esteem ;
And thence the people's servant went abroad,
Over the land of Egypt, gathering up
And storing, aided by his deputies,
The heavy harvests of those seven good years;
Till, like the sea-sands, grain past numbering.
Two sons were born to Joseph by his wife
Before the years of famine came. The first
He named Manasseh ; for love blessed him so,
He quite forgot his toil and earlier life.

The second he called Ephraim, as the Lord
Had made him fruitful in affliction's place.
At length the period of dearth began,
And people from afar as well as near,
Came into Egypt, where the granaries
Were opened, Joseph selling to their need;
For he alone controlled the precious bread.—

When Jacob meanwhile, troubled with the want,
Learned there was corn in Egypt, he prevailed
Upon his sons to thither go and buy,
Before their failing household pined for food.
They all but Benjamin, for he was kept
By Jacob, who feared mischief might befall,
Journeyed from Canaan, famine driving them:
And when arrived, before their brother bowed
Low and beseechingly. They knew him not,
Yet he remembered all, but made himself
Strange unto them, roughly accosting thus:
"Whence come ye?" He was answered: "From the land
Of Canaan to buy food." Pretending doubts,
The governor exclaimed: "Ye spies are come,
To see the weakness of our provinces."
"Nay, lord," protested Judah, "but to buy
Food are thy servants come. We all are sons
Of one just man and true, nor live as spies."
Being doubted still, the tremulous Reuben spoke:
"Thy servants are twelve brethren, from a sire

Living in Canaan, where the youngest waits
With our weak father : one hath passed away."
In mastery of self, then Joseph said :
" That my indictment has not been removed—
Hereby shall ye be proved—by Pharoah's life !
Ye shall not go except your youngest come.
Send one of you for him, the brother named,
To prove your truth and free you from the ban ;
Else failing thus, ye surely must be spies.—
Go." Said he to his medium, " Commit
These men to prison. Have their comfort marked,
Until I privately attend the case."
He put them into ward, but visited
And heard them speak as frequent as his heart,
Which held all fondly captive to itself,
Throbbed for their presence. But it soon misgave;
Fear taking up the place of tenderness.
Never thro' slow or dubious prospects cast,
That made all others doubt a season's pledge,
Had Joseph let the future hold alarm.
Protracted floods, or tardy elements,
Wrought not against that faith imposed above,
And settled as the Providence it owned.
When natural forces scourged obedient
Some point, and shocked those ignorant of good,
If in the partial sacrifice he came,
Joyous the last of earth had been resigned
To Order's righting as necessity.
But while the hunger of his soul for these

Was gratified a pace, smote conscience now;
And dread assailed him. Should they suffer thus,
Or, worse suspicion, would his father pine,
Awaiting them—could he rely on grace
Who dared hold back when Heaven gave him charge?
So struggled Joseph till the third day dawned
Upon his brethren, whose imprisonment
Might have appalled them had they spoken false.

With dull interpreter that spoke between,
The good man found their cell, and said to them:
"This do, and live;—(I fear God's countenance!)
If ye be true, let only one remain
Bound in my keeping; while the rest take corn
To stay the famine of your families.
But bring your youngest brother unto me,
So verified, ye shall not be condemned."
Agreeable as the counsel went, each feared
Lest he be left the victim, doomed alone
To suffer, by his brethren forfeited.
Such had experience taught them, when untrue
They sold a brother, now recalled to mind;
And said one to another. "Verily,
We guilty are concerning our own blood;
In that we saw the anguish of his soul
When he besought us, and we would not hear;
Therefore is this distress upon us come."
And Reuben answered: "Spake I not to all,
Dissuading sin against the child of grace?

Ye would not hear, hence is atonement due."
They knew not Joseph understood, tho' full
He turned himself about from them and wept;
But posed as if deep study bowed his head,
In undertone soft feeling thus escaped,
While his locked fingers barred the bursting eyes:
"How fondly could I speak forgiving words
And fold them prodigal in love again,
Which, like a void, extendeth wide my being,
Till one endeared with offspring dutiful
Possess a lonely world. Yet did I so—
Without that father and his best beloved,
What measure would they fill, where all on earth.
And even those to come, should find a place?
Oh, if affection be allowed to sway,
Unchecked by prudence, what extremity
Its might will lead to! That my aim miss not,
I still must steadily maintain myself."
Returning to them with a front composed
He, thro' his second, thus communed again:
"As no course safer can be found, and time
Is pressing—sorest at your home perhaps—
One will be chosen and for hostage stay
Till your return. All silent bowed assent.
The choice on Simeon fell; but when rude hands
Attempted binding him, the brother heart
Revolted, and with tender touch that toyed
Longer than need enjoined, or still undid
For pretense what was fit enough before,

Joseph himself about his kinsman meek,
Bound soft the bands that ceremony claimed.
Nor, when his brethren sadly waved adieu
And passed out followed by the attendants free,
Would Joseph join them, ere he doffed in haste
His downy cloak, and cast it on the couch
That brother was to languish on alone.

Soon by command their sacks were filled with corn,
And each man's money snug therein restored;
But as provision for the way was given
They guessed not aught until some distance on,
One of them opening his sack, espied
Hid in its mouth the token of exchange.
He called the others, frightened this to find,
And they with evil thought berated Heaven;
As men are wont to, when conditions start
Mysterious and their reckonings are confused.
No obstacle was met in reaching home;
But after telling Jacob what befell,
And why his second son came not to cheer—
Kept until Benjamin should prove them true,
They emptied all their sacks, and each disclosed
The bundle of his money there returned.
Then fear disturbed them, and their father wailed:
"Ye have bereaved me! Joseph—Simeon—
Are gone, and will ye take my Benjamin—
All things are turned against me!" Reuben moved,
To soothe his father said: "Slay my two sons,

If I bring not thy youngest back to thee!
Trust to my hand, and safe will we return."
But doubt paternal shook the aged head,
Whose weak alarm all purpose thus denied:
"My son shall not depart; his brother dear
Is dead, and he alone is left to me."
Bowed was the patriarch—his long grey beard
Adown his bosom flowing, tossed by grief
Which swayed him now, lashed like a silvery stream
Into white waves disordered. So his sons
With sympathetic looks stood abject by,
None hoping to console the heart distressed.
"Lord! must I sacrifice," he cried anon,
"As Abraham believed and would have done,
To show his faith, but for the Will divine?
If then Thou didst disprove of victim's blood
And teach Love's mercy in protecting life,
Why are my dearest claimed—to suffer more
Thro' agony prolonged than speedy death?
Thine aid, O Justice, unto Isaac shown
Was promise to his offspring. Need is ours;
And lowly for Thy grace as we implore,
Deliver us from sore extremity!"
He minded not in misery, that Heaven
Awaited neither trial nor the prayer
Of stricken spirit, but had blest his seed
With providential thoughts the world ignored.
As hoary tree, the parent of a grove,
Bends groaning stormed by ruthless counter blasts,

That scourge beside its vigorous growths around,
And rouse to rustling weird their many leaves,
So Israel bowed and moaned, while all his sons
Joined their sad whisperings to the mournful sound.

Not with more certainty a sentenced soul
Looks forward, fear increasing as the date
Relentless, unavoidable draws nigh,
When dread must culminate and heart endure,
Than Jacob measured to the moment dark
But sure, when need would force him to submit,
And send his suppliant household forth again;
Even to the last beloved who bore his name.—
Ah, lesson strict of Providence, how deep
Should such impression sink into the minds
Of all by waste subjected thus to want,
For future charity unmerciful!—
Above coarse numbers who, in plenteous hours,
Sunk and debauched by Selfishness, let pass
What Wisdom gave to reason, or despised
The counsel Nature uttered, vain as dull;
Apportioning to these (who famine deemed
As tyranny of God) sat Joseph calm.
Before him stood a man in rich attire,
But negligent; his garment dragging marked
The floor his ill-tied sandals slipped along,
While thus his mouth proved vent to insolence:
"I came from distance, to supply the needs
Of hungry numbers, helpless but for me,

Rich as I am in that commanding all—
The yellow pith which rots not in the ground—
Bright, golden grains of wealth, no season harms.
But long, unnecessary leagues I crossed,
Embarrassed by the narrow policy
Your state maintained, in cribbing close at hand
The products distant purchasers would want;
Which to transport so far, must shave their gains
Below a recompense for trouble met."
"Whose mission bearest thou?" Joseph coldly asked.
"Mine own." The dealer answered. "For altho'
The starving cries of hundreds sent me here—
Their active benefactor—yet be sure,
Whom I assist will make me full return
In goods or labor as equivalent."
"If thou wouldst have us send the food required,"
Said Joseph pointedly, "to save the expense
That thou hast muttered at, what bulk and where
Must we convey, in case acceded to?"
Presenting papers to the governor,
This self-appointed agent of distress,
Bold thus announced his plans therein set down
"My route is clearly shown upon the draft,
But not my method. Tho' the total marked
For purchase aggregates, in small amounts
Would I deliver it, and so secure
My profits by demand; while violence
Could scarcely threaten limits so discreet."
"Our rule," the Hebrew then proclaimed aloud,

"Thro' Egypt, while this regimen survives,
Shall first consult the good of every one;
When, if rewards be numerous, they will pass
Only on those most likely to esteem.
These papers held, their author is assured
All points within will be attended to.
Yet we forbid him under penalty
To go beyond our gates. We judge it wise,
For just example, that he stay with us!
Free otherwise to feed upon his gold,
Or beg what else he had deemed less than dross—
For who dares sell him shall be criminal,
Subject to punishment severe and long."
Surprise that brought confusion on the rogue,
Who would have trafficked in the lives of men,
Was wonderful to witness. Blank he stared
Upon that master of humanity,
Then furtive turned his eyes on those around,
With vainest protest, as his dark lips whined:
"Is this what enterprise obtains for all—
A check that shows the treachery of State,
Snatching the prize another has in view,
Fierce to its greedy and more powerful grasp?"
"Desist!" cried Joseph. "We might confiscate
And pass upon the questionable spoils
Now held by thee, who hath not marked a palm
To prove legitimate thy right in such.
Not for gross profit will these plans be used;
The commonwealth essential to itself,

Hath vital interest in the people's health!
No dead metallic basis is its strength,
But energetic life—a nation's being.
Give way, while shame and pity from thy kind
Alone affect us. Still attempt no flight—
Thy fortune's burden must be made to teach."
Defeated Satan's follower skulked off,
Mumbling his wrath; as when some hound chastised
For snapping midst his pack, goes snarling low
From lash he dares not turn upon; so sneaked
The objective cannibal with leers away.
Many and various were the characters
Drawn before Joseph since the dearth began;
Yet of the destitute none were refused
Provision, save most false or wasteful ones:
These were directed to superiors
Who had the care of feeding mind as well.
But meanwhile Israel's members had consumed
The corn they brought from Egypt, and returned
At their sad father's sufferance, this time
With Benjamin, who, as they entered meek,
Was recognized by Joseph. Bright the glance
He gave his agent in commanding thus:
"Bring to my home these men, and feast prepare;
For they shall dine with me at noon to-day."
Astonished, they were led to Joseph's house,
Afraid because of such distinction shown;
Not thinking that compliance this confirmed.
They thought—as was most frequent, when the sway

Of Selfishness imbruted souls of men,
Skilled power to capture prisoners of wealth,
And claim thro' pretext their life's services—
That, since the money which had been returned
In their first purchase, might convict them now,
The governor contrived this as a trick,
To seize them for his bondsmen, with their goods.
Alarmed the eldest, ere they entered in,
Approached the brother's steward and appealed:
"O sir, we came in faith before to buy!
Nor until reaching a far distant inn,
And opening out our sacks, found we that sum
Of money there, which we have brought again
In hand, with more to pay for fresh supplies;
We cannot tell who put our money back."
The steward then: "Peace to you—do not fear!
Your God, the Lord of Israel, hath bestowed
Treasure for each thro' Love.—I had the pay."
He brought forth Simeon to them, when all
Were ushered into Joseph's house, and cleansed;
Their beasts without, being well provided for.
The brothers, reassured, arranged their gifts—
Balm, fruits and honey, spices, myrrh and nuts—
Ready before the master came at noon,
Conscious that they would eat bread there with him.
Soon as his generous duties were dispatched,
The man of grace expectant hastened home;
Where each brought in the present Jacob sent,
And bowed again before him to the earth.

He asked them of their welfare, but his breath
Waved to the question: "Is your father well—
The old man whom ye spoke of—lives he yet?"
Anxious his voice began, but quick regained
Composure; busy moves his subterfuge;
As if he planned abstracted, listening still.
At which spoke Reuben, answering: "In good health
Thy servant, our just father, liveth yet."
Nor more he said, but bowed, when Joseph longed
For conversation on his parent's state.
Resting fond eyes upon that brother dear,
His mother's modest son, the warm heart breathed:
"Your youngest brother this, of whom ye spoke?"—
Hard was the hand held off while thus he blest:
"May God be gracious unto thee, my son!"
That effort of restraint quite overcame,
Commander tho' he was; the panting breast,
So yearning for its own, made haste away
To chamber, where the cisterns of his soul
Poured out libations at the shrine of Love.
Bathing his face, he came forth fresh again,
Refrained himself, and said: "Set on the bread."
Before him sat the first-born, placed by right;
The younger then according to his youth;
And, wondering from the first, they marvelled now,
With meaning glances silently exchanged.
Due rites observed, the host sent round each mess,
But Benjamin's came richest from the hand
That would have fed him with a mother's care,

Altho' to manly presence he was grown.
Their doubt departed as the meal progressed;
Trust rose from gratitude and pleasure thence,
Until in chalices of genial tide,
The spell of hospitality spread round,
And spirit woke to friendly intercourse.
Smiles radiant crowned their faces, whilst the wit
Of Judah sparkled freely as the wine.
Close had he drawn a dish his nearest sought,
When, as the latter gaped with wide stretched mouth,
The tempted wag feigned horror as he warned:
"Take heed, dear brethren—nigh, a yawning chasm,
That might ingulf our number, shows itself!"
"And wind howls there beside"—quoth Zebulun.
"Beat back by dull rock opposite!" Judah urged.
So bantered each, while Joseph planned their stay,
The weakness of his heart being yielded to;
His steward near received this strange command:
"Have their sacks filled, and money placed therein;
But put my silver cup within the mouth
Of that belonging to the youngest one."
Nodding, the servant hastened to dispatch;
Then all arose, invited to survey
The favored premises and manners there.

Bright started they with morning's golden flood,
Rejoicing homeward. Laden well and fed,
Their asses moped along in straggling line,
Some switched to quicker pace, or lashed again.

When from the city's precincts they withdrew,
And yet not far off, Joseph called to him
The obedient steward, saying: "Up pursue
Those men! and overtaking say to them,
'Wherefore have ye requited ill for good?'
My goblet missing, tell them, is the same
I drink from, and whereby indeed divine!
The rest will follow to indulge my whim."
Prepared, the knowing messenger was gone,
And speedy reached their lumbering train, addressed:
"Wherefore have ye requited ill for good?
The cup is gone my lord divineth by."
With less confusion and acclaim are heard
The plaint of geese, encountered on their way
By swifter animal, than now strained out
The frightened throats of Israel's timid flock.
"Whence comes the accusation? God forbid
Thy servants should be guilty!" one exclaimed.
Another cried: "Behold, the money found
Upon our first return, we brought again,
From Canaan far, and gave it unto thee!
How then should we be thought to steal the like?"
Last, Reuben gaining audience advanced:
"With whomsoever the design is found,
Both let him die and we be bondmen taken."
The steward thus: "He to whom theft is traced
Shall be made serve; but ye may blameless go."
At once the men removed their packs to ground,
And each his own sack opened, while the search

Beginning at the eldest followed down,
In silence of suspense, that sighed relief
Towards the last. Now Benjamin was reached—
None doubted him—and yet all held their breath,
As vague presentiment surrounded them.
Deep in his sack the missing cup was found,
And drawn forth sudden on their startled sight.
Then violent grief assailed them. Desperate,
Some flung their goods aside, but one by one
Resumed the burden unavoidable;
As tho' the finger of hard fate was seen,
Pointing back sternly. Wretched they returned,
And met the master yet within his walls;
There fell before him prostrate, trembling, dumb.
Contending spirits ruled when Joseph asked:
"What guise of deed is this that ye have done?
Wot ye not I am such as can divine?"
And Judah wailed: "What shall we say, my lord,
How speak to clear ourselves? God hath laid bare
Thy servants' dark iniquity; behold,
Both we, and whom the cup was found with, bow
As bondmen to thee." But his hearer said:
"The Lord forbid that I should order so!
What hand the trick convicted shall alone
Render me service; as for you, depart
In peace unto your father." Judah rose
At this, hope moving him—so quick the sense
Of trouble catches mercy's faintest tone.
Earnest the mouth and manner that implored:

"O, generous lord! let me, I pray thee, speak
The heart's sincerest measure, hearing all;
Nor let thine anger burn against a slave
Distressed! for thou art even as the king.
Thy servants answered thee in simple truth,
When questioned first regarding relatives.
An aged father and one brother else,
The child of his old age—survivor sole
Of a dear mother whose first son is dead—
We told thee, lord, remained at home. Thou saidst,
'Bring the youth hither,' as if doubt prevailed.
Ah then, my lord, we said to thee, in faith,
That if the last should leave, his sire would die.
Still thou didst specify, unless he came
With us, we would not see thy face again.
Urged to return for food, we spoke thy will,
Wherein thou wouldst deny us countenance;
To which our father answered sore at heart:
'Ye know that my beloved wife bare me two;
And one went out from me, to be destroyed—
By wild beast torn—for him I saw not since.
Oh, if ye take this last and dearest life,
And mischief should befall him, ye shall bring
My grey hairs down in sorrow to the grave!'—
How, therefore, could I face that father's sight
Without the youth—see grief strike dead my sire,
And witness his sad ruin thus fulfilled?
I became surety for return to him,
Taking the blame forever on myself,

If aught befell his son. Therefore, I pray,
Let me abide as bondman to my lord,
Instead—him thoughtless with his brethren free.
Ah, Heaven forefend a penalty so great—
Mine eyes avert forever from the woe,
If such dark evil on my father fall!"
He appealed, nor longer Joseph could refrain
Before them and the others who stood by.
"Cause all beside to go!" he gave command,
And was obeyed; his brothers only stared.
Aloud he wept in making himself known,
So that his voice was heard throughout the house.
As a strong current, pent at some deep point,
Swells silent till its pressure breaks the bounds,
Then bursts mellifluous from long restraint,
Joseph's excess of sentiment so checked,
At length took way, so poured his passion forth:
"Come near to me, my brethren!" Started they,
Tho' troubled at his presence, when he cried:
"I am your long-lost brother, whom ye sold
Into Egyptian bondage. Be not grieved!
God sent me here before you to preserve
The life of all. Two years of famine gone,
Yet five exempt from harvest are to come,
Before the wearied soil resuscitates.
Not you, but Heaven hither willed my way;
That Power a father made me to the king,
And ruler of his country. Haste ye, so,
Back to our patriarch Jacob—say to him

God hath made Joseph Egypt's governor;
Thus saith thy son: 'Come, father, unto me—
Tarry not—thou, thy children and their flocks
Shall dwell in Goshen near, that I may guard
And nourish thee; for five years yet of want,
Threaten thyself and household with the world.'—
Your eyes, and thine, O brother Benjamin,
Attest my mouth delivereth unto you!
Tell our dear parent all that ye have seen,
And make haste hither to return with him."
Warm he embraced young Benjamin, who wept
Upon the neck so clung to. Fond caress
Busied the feverish fingers stroking soft
Each waving tress, the while their glances met.
Forgiving all the others, at his touch
Affection moved them. Smiles and confidence
Assured him, ere obedient to his king,
(For Pharaoh had already heard the fame
Of their reunion and for Joseph sent)
The noble kinsman thus took leave of them:
"Make ready for the journey, brethren dear,
Whilst I attend my monarch's will. Be sure
No trifle shall delay me; there remains
A great deal to direct before ye go!
So now, God with you all, prepare at once."
His floating eyes still lingered as he left,
And they in silence bent their several ways.

Well pleased was kindly Pharaoh, counseling

The very course his second had in view,
As to his people dwelling in the land.
It was suggested that conveyances
Be given the brothers, to assist their wives
And little ones in coming; close regard
For gross effects dissuaded, as the best
Of all in Egypt would be placed to them.
Joseph accordingly provided each
With changes of apparel and such else
As Love considerate prompted; but to him
Least guilty, gave he silver bountiful.
He sent his sire ten beasts of burden, packed
With good things Egypt furnished, and ten more
Laden with bread and meat to cheer return.
So they departed, while their savior warned:
"See that ye fall not out upon the way!"
Long watched by him they went; resumed he then
His public duties, more content at heart.
Now had Egyptian money flowed for corn
Into the kingdom's coffers, and at last
The improvident masses had no more to give,
Though food was still their great necessity.
Throngs gathered dark around him to implore:
"Lord, give us bread! why famished should we die,
Here in thy presence? Money faileth all."
And Joseph pitying, but resovled on good,
Instructed them as follows: "Fetch your stock;
And for his cattle I will give each man
A full year's need of grain, if money fail.

Who may have most can help his neighbor poor,
Nor lose by charity ; because a herd
Will bring no more than any person's fold—
Supplies prescribed shall feed mankind, not brutes."
Thus speaking, he descended to prepare
Place for receipts so vast and cumbersome ;
Commanding several deputies thereon,
He walked forth, followed by the multitude.

Jacob, assured of Joseph's life and state,
More by the presents rich and wagons sent,
Than from his son's recitals, doubted first,
Revived in spirit; hopeful he exclaimed:
"Enough, kind Heaven, my son is yet alive!
Fond will I go and see him ere I die."
So Israel took the journey, bringing all,
And came to Beer-sheba, where devout
He offered prayer and sacrifice to God.
In visions of the night his Lord consoled
And strengthened him to enter Egypt strange,
With promise of a nation to his seed,
From whence eternal Love would bring him up.
At daylight Jacob rose. His sons attend
To bear him and their wives and little ones
In wagons sent to carry them. Their flocks,
And goods acquired in Canaan too, were brought.
The patriarch led a family of sons
Whose children's second generation came—
In all with wives they numbered nigh four score

But Judah was advanced, to guide their way
Unto the land of Goshen, entered soon.
There Joseph sped in chariot to meet
That venerated spirit weighed with age;
And bounding eager from yet wheeling height,
Clasped to his bosom's strength the trembling frame,
Whose fountains of affection overflowed
In tender utterance, that moved the rest,
And drew a deluge from their many eyes.
But reverence found enfeebled voice at length,
As Israel's soul to Joseph thus conveyed:
"Now let me die, since I have seen thy face,
For still alive, in thee I live!" To whom
His gracious son responded: "Father, calm
And rest thy troubles. Peace will best befriend
Such years of thine as Heaven destines yet
To lengthen with thy children. Feel secure
From want while Joseph near thee ministers.
Thy hope must now to Pharaoh, and inform
His thoughtful majesty that ye are come;
Telling him how as herders each hath brought
His stock into the country. When he asks,
What is your occupation?' tell him straight,
'Thy servants' trade from youth hath been about
Cattle, even to the present;' that ye may
Abide in Goshen. Every shepherd, know,
Is an abomination unto those
Of Egypt, suffering so from prejudice.
Half, follow me unto the king of men,

As timely as our father may be borne;
The others stay and here direct affairs
During the trivial absence." Light he sprung
Into his brilliant car, whose coursers smoked
From haste impetuous coming—now less swift
They bore him off—his motions fond adieus.

Presented unto Pharoah, they replied
As Joseph counseled them, and all went well;
The monarch even pleased to give them trusts.
But when the honored patriarch appeared,
Regal respect was reached, that asked of him :
" How old art thou ? To which the sage returned :
" My days of pilgrimage, a hundred years
And thirty added, are but few and dark,
Compared to what my fathers have attained. "
He blessed the anxious sovereign, and withdrew,
His glorious son attending to the land,
Their new possession, where no want assailed.
Bread given them as each family required,
Had as good purpose there as anywhere ;
Still raged the famine, tho' another year
Was entered on. The clamoring populace
Surged before Joseph, like a stormy sea
That bellows, scourged by force invisible.
Again their voice confessed : " We will not hide
How that our money spent, thou also hast
Our herds in purchase ; there is not aught left
To buy with but our bodies and our lands.

Yet, wherefore should we starve even in thy sight—
Our land a useless burden perishing?
Take us and our possessions for the bread
We crave, let us be servants to the king—
Our claims resigned back to the realm's estate,
Or give us seed to propagate for life,
Doomed otherwise—the land left desolate."
His gracious sense accepted partially
The common prayer; but bent not to enslave,
First having bought the land, exchanged for bread—
As famished each Egyptian sold his field—
He moved the masses, congregated close,
To different districts sparsely habited,
And guided labor, but no bondmen made.
The only land he bought not—small in tract—
Was that the people's educators held
For sacred purposes. The priests were these;
Checked from production with the king they fared.
While hundreds, thronged for audience, sought the desks
Of secretaries busy in their line,
To exchange rights, holdings, services and such,
For means of living, Joseph thus proclaimed:
"Behold, I having bought the land this day
For Pharaoh—lo, ye shall have seed who choose
To sow the same hereafter. What is past,
Supernal Wisdom deigned us; most have failed
By that loose system wanting government,
Which yields the commonwealth to private ends.

Henceforth as servants of the state engage,
Not recreant, nor restrained from enterprise;
For by increase reward to all may come—
One-fifth of every crop, or large or small,
Shall be your rental tax unto the king,
But the remaining four-fifths yours—exempt
From other burdens: as a general store,
Your contributions, in the most part saved,
Will serve distress and found security."
One, answering for the many, bowed and said:
"Since thou hast saved our lives, if but to find
Thy favor, will we serve the king and thee!
Yet who can labor in another's field
And lavish constant interest thereon,
When his improvements bring no recompense—
Perhaps, ere valued, seized by idler hands?"
"Hadst thou" (scored Joseph) "a fraternal heart,
Not listed with the spirit Selfishness,
But brave, extensive and magnanimous,
Ready to battle for thy fellowmen,
No work enjoyed by brothers would be grudged;
Nor might life's efforts pass ungratified!
Still, force of fact persuasive is not scorned,
For Justice graciously dispatches means
To meet encouragement. A tenant right
Will specify not only prior claim
Upon a settlement, but conditions wrought
Shall be regarded property, whose price,
Fixed by the market, must revert to whom

May have acquired such value, made or bought.
The tact of individuals is a gift
From God; and capital so sanctified,
Either in principle or consequence,
It were both theft and fallacy to tax.
Long as the seasons follow, may this law,
When once inaugurated, keep its course!
So that succeeding ages, thereby blest,
May, thanking Heaven, praise the rule of Love."
He spoke, and bending fervent from his seat,
Impressed with reverence the silent throng,
Bowed as they listened to his prayer benign.—

The rest of famine passed, and Earth again
Yielded her teeming burden to the sky;
While flourished birth toward maturity,
And this advanced to statelier age. The signs
Of ten and seven years had come and gone
Since Jacob entered Egypt; now, as fruit,
Whose fullness trembles on its weakened thread,
Before it falls to sink into the ground,
The seed of Isaac hung at verge of life,
Weighed, consummate, yet wavering in suspense.
His children held him loth to leave their world,
Such care the guiding nature still assumes;
But hope addressed him from that realm beyond,
Promised the honored fathers of his line.
By Joseph—sworn to bear the seer's remains
Where they would rest among his ancestors—

The patriarch was consoled. Pillowed he sat
Upon the bed he might not leave, to bless
Manasseh—Ephraim second being preferred;
They hushed respectful, heard the feeble voice:
"The Almighty, in a vision, came to me
At Luz, and blessing this my soul assured:
'Behold, I fruithful have anointed thee
To multiply on earth, and yet will raise
Thro' thee a multitude of people—safe
In long possession of the land I give.'"
Then to the son, whose presence made him strong:
"Thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, born,
My Joseph, unto thee before I came
To Egypt, are our progeny withal—
As Reuben, Simeon, they shall be mine.
What issue thou begetest after them
Be thine, and named in their inheritance.—
Thy mother Rachel died upon the way
From Padan, when nigh Ephrath we were come;
And there I buried her." Thus doted age;
But as his weak eyes turned on those near by,
He asked in feeble tremor: "Who are these?"
"My sons," said Joseph, "whom the kind Lord gave
To lighten here my pilgrimage." He calmed
The venerable man, who made request:
"Bring them, I pray thee, for my blessing close."
The eyes of Israel were growing dim,
So when brought near he knew not either one;
Yet both embracing, to their sire he announced:

"I had not thought to see thy face,—and lo—
God also hath revealed to me thy seed."
Next blessing them, devotion thus aspired:
"Thou, before whom my fathers, Abrabam
And Isaac, walked—my God protecting me,
Who all my life hath fed unto this day—
The Angel which redeemed me from all ill—
Bless thou the lads! and let my name be theirs,
The title Abraham and Isaac gave;
And let them grow into a multitude
Amidst the earth."—His other sons were called,
And as they came the laboring breath resumed:
"Gather about, ye sons of Jacob, near,
That I may tell you what must yet befall!
But hearken unto Israel, your sire.
Reuben, thou first-born, herald of my might,
Beginning of my strength, the excellence
Of dignity! Unstable as the tide,
Thou shalt not lead men, for thou hast defiled
Thy father's couch.—Simeon and Levi twain,
Prove instruments of cruelty at home. . . .
O soul of mine, their secret enter not—
Nor yet, mine honor, with their lot unite!
For in their anger they took life of man,
And through their self-will they digged down a wall.
Cursed is their rage of fury; hence will I
Divide and scatter them in Israel.—
Judah, thou whom thy brethren shall extol!
With hand upon the neck of enemies,

Thy father's children shall bow down to thee.
Thou from a lion's whelp wert given to rise—
He crouched in all his parts of hidden strength—
Grown, who shall rouse him up? The grace of sway
Will not depart from Judah, nor a mind
Judicious, until Shiloh shall have come.—
At the sea's haven Zebulun shall dwell,
A harbor in himself for human ships;
And unto Zidon shall his border reach.—
Issachar, a strong ass couched down between
Two burdens; loving peace and pleasant clime,
His shoulder bowed to bear the heavy load,
He shall a servant unto tribute be.—
"Dan, judging his, as one of Israel's tribes,
Will be a serpent in the path, and bite
The horse heels, so his rider shall fall back.—
I have waited, Lord, for Thy deliverance!—
A troop will vanquish Gad; but at the last,
He shall triumphant rise.—From Asher, bread
Shall be as fat; he royal dainties yield.
Mark, Naphtali, a hind let loose, sweet-breathed.—
Joseph—ah, Joseph is a fruitful bough,
Beside a fountain pure, whence branches run
Over the wall of stone. Sin's archers tore,
And shot, they not admiring! But his bow
Of strength, and arms embracing were endowed
By power Omnipotent. (The shepherd thence
That keepeth flocks, the stone of Israel!)
Even Whom thy father worships shall anoint,

And mightiest Wisdom bless thee over earth;
The blessings of thy father have prevailed
Above all hopes of his progenitors:
Such upon Joseph shall descend to crown
The head of him long separate from the rest.—
Last, Benjamin shall raven as a wolf—
In early hours he will devour the prey,
And at the dark of night divide his spoil."
Thus heard the heads of Israel's twelve tribes,
And Jacob sank exhausted; but revived
By Joseph's fond attention, having blessed,
He left, as follows, his last charge to them:
"Bury me with my fathers, in that cave
Upon the field of Machpelah, not far
From Mamre; on the land which Abraham
Bought of the Hittite, Ephron, as a place
For burial. Abraham is there reposed,
And Sarah, his beloved wife; beside,
The dust of Isaac and Rebekah rests;
And there I buried Leah." Light the breath
Passed off from him whose final whisper fled.

About the deathbed sorrowful his sons
Exchanged their melancholy signs of grief;
But Joseph most affected bathed the dead
With fervent tears that rained, as leaning fond
Above the clay, his utterance broke forth:
"O, spirit, freed from earth—mysterious mind!
Departed from the visible, where form

No longer found communicant remains--
A marble mansion prone, untenanted—
How shall thy sons hereafter, sorely tried,
Recourse obtain or counsel safe, which ruled
In thee so constant and defied distress?
Ah, never more those lips now sealed in peace
Will curl with music that thy soul supplied!
The organ's tubes are silent—thou art gone,
Thou mystic master who infused their breath!
Bereaved we linger while thy relic blest
Prompts our sad office.—To arrest decay,
Physicians shall embalm the shape revered,
And all fulfil their measure of respect;
My servants in the multitude shall mourn,
As honor follows to the good man's grave."
Thus sorrowing, Joseph touched the sense of all;
The others pensive as they wept around
With answering sobs told out affection's dirge,
While awful silence closed upon the scene.

When time for burial arrived, that son
Whose duty to humanity engrossed
As formerly the burden of his days,
Obtained permission from the king upon
Attending to his father's last request.
Grand was the funeral: but not its pomp
Consoled the man of misery. A faith
Divine in origin, appeased his soul
Drawn separate from the immortal life awhile,

Tho' still associate, locked in memory.—
Who, that hath lost a relative or friend,
And gazes on the wreck once occupied,
Now strange and senseless as it stony lies—
Who can accost and, meeting no reply,
Believe its wedded spirit there destroyed—
In that cold lump, the ruin of a love
No pain could frighten, no desire estrange?
The vacant vessel tenderly caressed
May claim a sense long subject to itself,
Which finds some consolation in its state;
But mind regards beyond that fellow-spark—
Whose motive hath no terminal—whose mark
Remaining evident, yet incomplete,
Awaits fulfilment in eternity.
Abrupt adjournment of such intercourse,
Sole point of worth that edifies mankind,
Can but interrogate the spirit tried;
And only jesters singularly dull,
Hold friendship here begun a short burlesque,
That ends in nothing. Often thus sciolists,
Self-educated into ignorance,
Confound themselves by trolling at one breath
Perpetual course and use for everything,
Yet closing with denials to the same.

Returned to Egypt, Joseph's brethren feared
Lest, since their aged defense was gone, his pride
Would punish them for evil done to him.

But Joseph bade them fear not, as he said :
"In God's place am I here—ye thought to harm,
But Love a rescue brought me—raised me up,
As this day witnesses, to save the living.
Now, therefore, fear ye not ! I will sustain
You and your little ones, be comforted."
So kindly speaking unto them, he calmed
Their fresh alarms and won their confidence.
Long after ruled the light of Providence,
Triumphant over Selfishness. The ranks
Of greed, subjected by such aid divine,
Either deserted sin, or bowed to law,
Which held advantages in strict reserve.
Thus time passed on, and Joseph lived to see
His sons' descendants to the third of line,
Giving them counsel, as about his knees
Succeeding prattlers rose in wonder round.
Nor parted he with life till common weal
Established comfort in the homes of men,
And brought experience which, though fiercely fought,
Would move victorious to the end of time.
Praised, honored by the people as his own,
The socialist departed to enjoy
Reward long promised of immortal state—
The crown of glory Love prepared for him.

BOOK VII.

That joy which peaceful victory extends,
Encouraged men in rectitude awhile;
But Satan's myrmidons regained too soon
Their attitude impertinent. With power
This indefatigable enemy
Of God, infernal Selfishness—whose arts
Ignore control, yet center in defeat,—
Still urged on other miscreants to the charge
That promised happiness and brought despair.
A king assumed the government of man
Who, slave of greed, failed even to rule himself.
He knew not Joseph, nor respect for right,
Disdaining all experience. Doubt and dread
Told tho' the envy that affected him,
When to his followers he interposed,
That lest the sons of Israel by increase
Should become mightier and assist his foes,
Their burdens thenceforth must be made to afflict,
And masters set to drive them in their toils.
Coerced, the Hebrews labored while they built
The sights of Pithom and Raamses, famed
As treasure cities for the brutal king.

Despite affliction, Israel multiplied,
And grew so powerful, Egypt grieved the more.

Tho' groaned offenseless lives in bondage hard,
The mortar that they mixed, or measured brick,
Or service in the field, restored that health
Abused thro' their captivity. Like beasts,
By greedy masters fed but for the work
Expected, and kept useful—much as tools
Are minded for utility alone—
The chosen people a protection found
From sheer destruction ; yet despised for all.
The desperate monarch, coarse as shallow-brained,
Insulted Hebrew midwives with commands
To kill all males at issue. But the power
Of Love was stronger in the female breast,
That ever hath braved trial to protect
What man, base proselyte of Satan, threats.
Failing to govern nature by this course,
The rash usurper dared to charge all men
To cast their coming sons into the tide,
So daughters only might be spared to them.
Thus while the barbarous edict went in force,
A daughter of the Levi branch conceived
And bare a son, whose title unto life
Maternity resolved. Three months concealed
The infant blest her care, and when she felt
She could not longer hide him, Nature taught
A subterfuge. The mother framed a crib
Of bulrushes, which, daubed with slime and pitch,
Served a small ark secure to ride the waves.
Her load of life reposed therein, she launched

The precious vessel on the river's brink,
But where thick flags would check its flight and shield.
A sister of the child, from distance safe
Stood watch, to wit what would become of him;
When one of Pharaoh's daughters came to bathe,
Her help-maids walking by the river side.
The crib was seen, and one of them dispatched
To fetch it. Opened by the lady's hands,
Behold an infant nestled there and wept!
Compassion filled her heart, whence pity sighed:
"This child is of the Hebrews under ban."
Then said his sister, who had braved approach,
Altho' she trembled for the consequence:
"Pray, shall I go and call to thee a nurse—
Some Hebrew woman likeliest for the babe?"
And Pharaoh's daughter bade her go in haste.
Swift were the maiden's feet to reach her home,
Whence the fond mother hurried to that call
So full of anxious moment, but prepared.
Ah, when the princess charged her: "Take this child
And nurse it for me—I will pay thee well"—
Already paid beyond the power of gold,
A mother's prudence scarcely could control
The exuberance of happiness within.
Silent she took her infant, fearing word
Or look might tell against the fostered waif.
But as he grew with years of tenderest care,
And loved her as his mother, it required
Heroic spirit to resign him grown,

A son adopted into royal place.
However, there was consolation met
From the reflection of his promises
And eminent advancement resting there.
Nor wasted went these opportunities
For study or reflection. Thro' his hours
Of lonely labor, Moses (so addressed
By royalty that saved him from the waves)
Appeared as one morose and diffident,
While arming for the war he was to wage,
Against the oppressors of his fellow-men.
All dark impostures ruling in those days
Were noted—every point that science gained,
Possessed and valued by the master mind;
Which, though no plan arranged itself to view,
Felt the full weight of duty sure to come,
And great responsibility involved.—
There is a premonition of the soul,
That prompts some natures doubtful of their course;
Urging them, in the face of all distrust,
To triumphs proving Heaven's compelling power.
As instruments they execute the Will,
Worthy because of an obedience grand,
Which gives their genius to more noble cause
Than selfish occupation. Nor may such
Be held exceptional from common acts:
Where qualities are mightiest, passions swell
Proportioned to the traits they stimulate.
The lash of insult on his people laid

Afflicted most the man of dignity,
Who constant felt his origin attacked.
But, even had pagan numbers suffered thus,
He must have championed them. An innate force
Antagonizing wrong, would have impelled
The mighty moralist to strike for right.

Injustice challanged him so frequently
And met no answer, he was prone to think
His own heart cowardly—repugnant thought—
Until upon a day, like many passed,
He went out where his slaving brethren groaned,
And looked upon their burdens : he beheld
An authorized Egyptian smiting one
Whose task and features told his Hebrew birth.
Aroused, indignant Moses, quick to rage,
Turned on the petty tyrant, dashing him
Against the ground so furious, death ensued.
Observing no one nigh who might inform,
The hot avenger hid him in the sand ;
But what regret this hasty act entailed
Was borne in sullen silence afterwards.
Next day the restless student walked again,
And found two Hebrews fighting ; then to him
Who seemed the aggressor, Moses gently said :
" Peace—wherefore smitest thou thy fellow thus ?"
With ready impudence, the man returned :
" Who made thee judge and ruler over us ?
Intendest thou to kill me, as thou didst

The Egyptian yesterday?" And Moses feared,
Saying to himself, "Surely this thing is known."
From Pharaoh's sight he was constrained to fly,
Or suffer death; so leaving hopes behind,
The fugitive escaped to Midian;
Where, by a well that cooled his fevered breath,
He sat and brooded on his lonely lot.
The daughters of a priest abiding near,
Came to draw water for their father's flock,
When shepherds rude to banter them approached.
From these the maids retreated modestly;
But Moses gallantly arose, and helped
The backward damsels, watering their drove;
Whereat the scamps respectful drew apart.
As timid doves fly fluttering to their nest
And show adventure has excited them,
The maidens reached their father, Reuel named;
Who, when he learned a man had lent them aid,
Sent Moses greeting, and invited him
To grateful hospitality.—Content
With dwelling there the mournful man remained,
And wed Zipporah, at her sire's consent.
His son's name, Gershom, born of her, implied
The exile's feeling in so strange a land;
But dutiful for all he kept the flocks
Of Jethro, leading them to graze afar,
Thro' solitudes congenial with his thoughts.

He came to Horeb—sacred as the mount

Of God, where Inspiration kindled faith—
And there the Angel of the Lord appeared
To wondering manhood. Open was the soul
Devout which witnessed in a glowing bush
The miracles of Heaven changing there—
That flame of Life made visible to mind,
Consuming not, but giving vital heat—
Preserving vigor in the fruitful plant.
Eager to study, Moses turned aside,
That he might learn the marvels Light revealed;
For spirit recognized the Voice divine
Calling on inmost personality.
Thus ready soul received the Oracle:
Presume not further, for the ground thou treadst
Is holy—even God addresses thee!
I am the Sovereign Source, Whom Abraham,
Isaac and Jacob hailed in reverence.
Then Moses hid his face, while awe controlled,
Imposing silence on the worshipper.
Eternal Love compassionate resumed:
The affliction of My people I have seen;
Heard is their cry against the selfish host
That keeps them in captivity. Their woes
Have called down Heaven to deliver them
Out of ungrateful slavery, and to bring
Those suffering, to a land with plenty blest.
Behold, the cry of Israel moveth Me!
So, therefore, as an agent dutiful,
Even I direct thee unto Pharaoh's court;

That thou mayst free My people from their thrall,
And bring them forth from Egypt. Thus the Voice
Appealed to consciousness where purpose slept,
Or part exclusive prized its heritage.
But Moses answered as his doubt conveyed:
"Lord, who am I, that mission of such weight
Be placed on me—to interview a king,
And lead his prostrate subjects from the land?
May not my lonely duty be fulfilled
By service to my family in peace,
Stung by no treacherous ingratitude
From mortals ignorant of motives high?"
But Justice promised: I will be with thee;
Let this prove token that I sent thee forth:
When thou hast freed the people, ye shall serve
The king of Heaven alone upon this mount.
Still to the moving Spirit Moses said:
"Behold when Israel's children I have joined,
And shall accost them saying, The God of all
Hath sent me unto you—when they shall ask,
What is His name—how shall I answer them?—
Can human thought define Thee, Infinite?"
I Am, the Lord made answer, That I Am!
Thus shalt thou silence those inquisitive—
Who Is Eternal sent me unto you.
Together call the elders of thy race,
And tell them Truth appeared to thee—that God
Their fathers worshipped, Whose behest
Thou hast obeyed. Assure them One is nigh,

All-seeing to deliver them from wrong;
Who hath a rich inheritance prepared
For them. And they shall hearken to thy voice!
Thou and the heads of Israel attend
Upon the king of Egypt, saying to him,
'The Lord our God, adored by Hebrew faith,
Is joined with us: now, therefore, let us go,
Some three days' journey to the wilderness.'
Nor will he let you go, but mightier hold!
For I must pour down wonders to reduce
The haughty creature's pride before he yields.
Yet shall ye come not empty from the land
Your thrift enriched; but some rewards withheld,
As spoils retrievable shall be possessed,
That evil flourish not upon the past.
But doubt distressing, Moses prompted still:
"Alas, they may not bend to or believe
My voice! for they will measure power and say,
'The Lord hath not been visible to thee.'"
Then Wisdom questioned: What supports thy hand?
A rod! the learned man bethought; at which,
Urged by the Spirit, to the ground he cast
What suddenly appeared a writhing snake,
Whose nature studied long, yet startled now,
Till faith impelled him to reach forth and grasp
The trick transfigured in his hand again.
By such convinced the dullest would believe
His unity with God—not otherwise—
He also thrust his hand unto his breast,

And drew it forth as leprous white as snow ;
When, thro' the self-same act it was restored.
The agent Heaven instructed for success,
(Wherein a multitude incredulous
Must be made trust—who, tainted by the arts
Of magic-mongers, reverenced nothing else)
Was finally persuaded to employ
Weapons to match those of the enemy,
Fraught with things supernatural in point.
Even scientific skill so rarely shared,
Gave him advantage over earthly forms,
Where meet illusion might its like dispel
And conquer crossed deception as disease.
But, cried flesh, dubious of ability :
"O Lord, I am not eloquent!" So Truth
Propounded inward : Who hath made man's mouth,
The dumb or deaf, the seeing eyes or blind?
Who but the Lord, now bidding thee advance,
And Who will teach thy tongue its thunder tones !
Reluctant Moses plained : "My Lord, command,
I pray Thee, by what other hand Thou wilt !
Mine is no potence for an enterprise
Distraught with thankless struggling. Could I bear
The heavy hazard onward to success,
Buffeted by the flux of selfish wills
That chafe in torrent I would have to breast,
Their many murmurings, albeit overcome,
Must vex forever my recurrent thought.
Leaves any wrong a more malicious sting

In heart which pulsates for its suffering kind,
Than low ingratitude that mocks good aims,
Pecks at integrity, or traitorous,
For its foul self, weakens some holy end?
Yet such among the masses may be found;
Who under thraldom give effective aid
To common tyranny, bought or otherwise;
As often neither place nor thanks are theirs,
So personally soulless greed remains.
I have not patience for this test severe,
Hence would withhold from it. Amidst the fray
Are many—may not they, kind Lord, obtain?"
Strange, individualism thus abhorred,
Should hold the heart unwilling, until sense
Of that Divine displeasure consequent,
Out of self's policy its motive raised.
Now conscience suffered just reproof from Heaven,
And Moses, yielding to his love for man,
Accepted Aaron, brother of his hopes,
As mouthpiece for his eloquence; while the plans
Inspired to sway in him commissioned thence.
Assured that he would meet his relative,
And put the words auspicious in his mouth,
While Love instructed both in every way;
To Jethro he returned resolved, and said:
"Let me depart to Egypt and attend
My brethren, hopeful that they yet survive."
And Jethro gracious bade him: "Go in peace!"
With wife and sons, Moses set out at once,

Prepared to work the wonders of his rod
Before the ruling tyrant—to announce
That Israel was the son of God beloved,
Who sent this message, for the king to free
His son that he might serve Him—if refused,
The monarch's issue must not hope for life.

Careless upon the way he met distress,
Which came endured as warning from the Lord
Of caution. Then Zipporah from her son
Cut the foreskin and saved him, fretting thus:
"Surely a bloody husband thou hast proven,
Because of circumcision here required."
Still, patient 'midst vexations, Moses held
And trained himself for battle with the world.
Into the wilderness, by Love impelled,
The tireless feet of Aaron found a way;
Where brotherly embrace warmed mutual trust,
As Moses made him confident in all
That Inspiration prompted. Mighty thence
They kept their course; the elders summoning
Of Israel's children; Aaron giving voice
To the great words his principle dispensed.
The people honored by the thought of God,
Bowed in true faith and worshipped while new hope
With hallowed blessings visited their souls
Long subject to injustice and despair.
Straight unto Pharoah Truth's disciples went,
Fearless of injury, when thus they spoke:

"Our Lord, the God of Israel, biddeth thee
To let his people go, that they may hold
A feast unto Him in the wilderness,"—
The scoffing tryant checked: "Who is the Lord,
Whose voice I must obey to let you hence?
I know none such; neither will Israel go."
To whom the plain petitioners returned:
'Our God hath met with us in this emprise;
We pray thee therefore, let us go our way,
And sacrifice obedient to him;
Lest pestilence upon the numbers fall."
Purple with rage, the royal rogue exclaimed:
"Wherefore dare ye, to trusted learning false,
Abstract the people from their needful works?
Get you unto your burdens!" Then alone—
Save with the busy imp of avarice—
The governing error sent commands abroad
To all task-masters and their officers
Appointed o'er the Hebrews, in effect,
To give them no material for their toil
As formerly, but make then find the same.
And yet their tale of bricks must not be short,
Nor aught diminished of their services.
"For," urged the tryant under blind control,
"They have had leisure to consult, and cry
For lazier freedom, meant in sacrifice.
Let there more work be laid upon the men,
That, busy, they may not regard vain words."

The people scattered thus throughout the land,
By this forced move, were beaten in their task—
Weakened, divided from that common hope,
Which like short twilight flashed before the night.—
Festers not time with representatives
Foul as the Pharaohs pampered, gross in wealth,
Schooled to deny equality or rights,
And charge pretentious to incompetence,
Or lack of thrift, those ills their greed inflicts?
No artifice of Satan can be named
That has not been employed to proselyte,
Disrupt and even antagonize mankind;
So the small number may defy the great,
And strip securely there distracted slaves.
Mighty as Light sweeps glorious over earth,
The wings of error follow, casting shade,
And masking to shut out from moral sight
The radiant herald it would personate.
But as a prince of science once proclaimed,
'The world doth move,' tho' not perceptible.
Succeeding ages, while inheriting
Transmitted evils, lose them by degrees;—
Improved conditions point to aid Divine,
For nothing less had changed the monstrous past.—
Those over Israel's issue, lashed at length
To desperation, sought the despot thus:
"Why deal'st thou, sire, so harshly on our lot?
No straw is given us, and yet our work
Is claimed in full by masters merciless!

Behold thy servants beaten ; but the fault
With thine own people rests." The scourge replied :
"Nay, ye are idle—sloth it is that pleads
And plans for visionary sacrifice.
Away to work—naught shall be here vouchsafed.
Yet shall ye needs deliver, as before."
Then Israel's officers knew evil strait ;
When, meeting Moses and his kinsman nigh,
The disappointed turned sad-eyed to them
And said : "The Lord upon you look and judge!
For ye have brought our hope into contempt
Before the eyes of Pharaoh and his train—
Given them weapons to destroy us with."
Disheartened, Moses sought that solitude
Wherein he communed with the Spirit, crying :
"Lord, wherefore hast Thou willed the people so
To evil power—why has thou sent me on ?
Since I came hither in Thy name to speak,
The king hath heaped more wrong upon Thy band ;
Neither hast Thou delivered us at all."
While groaned the Chief of miserable men,
And heavenly promise wretched now recalled,
If fountains issued from those upturned springs
Addressed to Heaven, all was soon assuaged,
As the Omniscient deigning to descend,
Possessed the vessel of His confidence
With might in grace renewed, and thus assured :
Soon shalt thou see My measures on the king ;
For with a strong hand he shall free his slaves,

Driving them from his land with arm of strength.
Unto thy fathers, as the Almighty known,
Not as Jehovah was I hailed by them!
Significant thy theocratic faith
In covenant established still abides,
Fed by perpetual teachings of all time.
Wherefore declare unto the chosen host,
Eternal Sovereign, I will bring them out
From under burdens of iniquity—
Redeem you with a Father's outstretched arm,
And by great judgments! that ye all may know
Your God hath liberated whom the false
Would have enslaved. A heritage is yours
Beyond the power of earthly worm, entailed
Upon My children and their sons to come."
Thus Moses following spoke to Israel;
But hearkened not the struggling multitude,
For cruelty and anguish crushed out hope.

Inspired again to face the autocrat,
And sue for Justice in high Heaven's name,
The sore tried leader hesitating mourned:
"Behold, O Lord, my brethren hear me not!
How then shall Pharaoh listen to my words?"
But Love resistless moved him as a god
Whose mediant power would seem miraculous;
And tho' made certain that the stubborn will
Of Satan's minion would delay the end,
Moses and Aaron in their trust engaged

To lead the scattered army forth at last.
Despite superior evidence of signs,
The tyrant steeled his heart, conceding naught
Even when the waters turned as blood, and stank
With rotting habitants that died therein.
Wisdom directed Moses, who once more
Confronted stupid royalty, and warned:
"The Lord commands to let His people go,
That they may serve Him. And if Thou refuse,
Thy borders shall be smitten by dark plague.
The river will abundant teem with frogs,
Which shall come up and enter thine own house;
Unto thy bed-chamber—upon thy bed—
Throughout thy servants' and thy people's homes—
Into thine ovens and thy kneading troughs!"
Scorned, Aaron stretched his hands above the floods,
Whence frogs sprang thick and covered all the land.
Magicians with enchantments added more,
Unable tho' to check the invading pest;
Till Pharaoh called for Moses, cozening thus:
"Entreat thy God to take away this scourge
Of foul slime animate, from me and mine,
And I will let the people go in peace,
To serve or sacrifice as suits them best."
Then Wisdom's agent: "Glory over me—
Since mine is only secondary power—
When shall I plead for thee and thine, to abate
And hold these creatures in their element?"
"To-morrow!" answered crowned deceitfulness;

To which the seer impressively replied :
"It shall be even according to thy words,
That thou supreme mayst know the Lord our God!
These pests shall perish with the coming day,
Or only in their proper place remain."
So promised he, for period dispensed,
Who with his brother offered prayer to Heaven.

By millions died the frogs in house and field,
That gathered into heaps sent out a stench ;
Fit protest for the lazy ignorance
Which failed to give them fertile to the ground.
As Heaven's power foresaw, the respite reached,
Only exposed a traitor to his word—
The false-tongued Pharaoh, pattern of his ilk,
When free from trouble, bold again becomes ;
Denies all pledges and assumes more pride.
Hath he not followers to the present day,
In full defiance of ten thousand laws,
From press or pulpit, by experience spread,
Who sink to falsehood as contemptible,
Whenever like emergency is met?
No blushes, but complacence sinister
Falls on the trusting masses, when surprised
They wonder how conservators of pride,
Maintain their status by so base a means.

The dust of earth to loathsome lice was turned,
Covering both man and beast thro' Egypt's bounds;

And this, beyond magician's skill to raise,
Convinced her scholars that the hand of God
Was manifest therein. Yet no appeal
Upon the selfish ruler had effect;
Altho' warned, intercepted at his bath,
By breath that Wisdom fitted to predict:
"Thus saith the Lord, if thou wilt not allow
My injured people to go free, behold,
Swarms shall be sent of flies on thee and thine,
Even to thy following and throughout their homes.
And I will sever on that day the land
In which my people dwell from this fierce plague,
That thou mayest know who is the Lord of earth.
Division shall be marked between my hosts
And thine! To-morrow shall this sign attend."—
A passing breeze as much attention claimed
From pampered, indolent indifference,
As Moses' message so explicit given.
But when from unseen myriad germs arose
Innumerable, grievous swarms of flies
Afflicting king and servant, thronging still,
Tho' fought all ways; infesting everything,
Regal impatience called Truth's ministers,
And with the impudence of Satan said:
"Go offer to your God, but in the realm!"
And Moses thus: "To do so is not meet;
For we must sacrifice unto our Lord
The abomination of Egyptian minds!
Lo, may we do the like before their eyes,

And they not stone us? We will take three days
Of journey to the wilderness, and there
Make sacrifice as Heaven shall command."—
To whom Deception: "I will let you go,
Where none unworthy may behold your rites;
Only observe not very far away!
Entreat for me." So minced the evil one.
Then spoke who new the future near at hand;
"Behold, I go from thee, to entreat the Lord,
That this plague with the morrow may depart!
But let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully
Again, in not allowing our race to go."
The man of Might departed, and his word
Found Will benign. Yet, when the swarms were gone
That maddened Egypt, Pharaoh proved as false
As insolent, nor would he honor faith.

Thro' course the cattle murrain preyed on died;
But Pharaoh's hardened heart remained the same;
Even after boils and blains on man and beast
Made all he looked upon detestable.—
Taught by the Author of eternal law,
The Hebrew leader rose at early hour
And came before the tryant with these words:
"Know, ruler, tho' the Lord hath raised thee up,
To show His power in thee, and that His name
Might be declared to all the ends of earth—
As yet thyself alone exaltest thou,
While under charge a people captive groan!

Be aware, to-morrow hail with thunder down
In volume such as never hath been known
Since the foundation to the present time.
Send therefore now and gather what thou hast
Of value from the fields ; for man or brute
Exposed, shall not survive the bolts of Heaven."—
Those fearful of the warning from above,
Urged others and their cattle to retreat,
Before the furies threatened from the sky.
But some regarding not the word of Truth,
Left in the fields their servants, droves and crops.
Soon came the sequence so exemplified—
The cloud heights roared, and spat their frozen foam
Upon the bellowing earth. Nor was this war
Of crowding forces spent in one long crash ;
Succeeding storms encountered where the gloom
Of previous terrors rested. All was dark,
Save the red fire that fell and poured along,
Tearing strange channels thro' the smoking ground.
Oh, then might fear have fancied in mid-air
A thousand demons shadowed dark engaged,
Hideous of aspect, endless in their powers,
Fierce as the bursting volleys hailed amain.
But most those awful peals, that frequent shook
The walls wherein a crowned impostor hid,
Hurled down on poor mortality cold fright.
Drowned in that greatest sound, the trembling prayer
Consoled not him who labored it unheard;
Silenced, no carnal utterance cared to bleat

Replies to that dread challenger on high.

The abject king for Heaven's agents sent,
And when they came before him, humbly said :
"I have sinned this time! The Lord doth righteous rule,
I, and my people wicked." Thunders here
Shut off the voice that tremulous next appealed:
"Entreat the Mightiest, (for it is enough !)
That there be no more dreadful thunderings
And furious hail ; and I will let you go—
Ye shall no longer stay." The gilded wretch
Crouched, as half hidden in his seat of state,
Dismay at every rumble wincing there,
Until the sage's milder tones replied :
"When from the city I am gone, and spread
My hands unto the Lord in prayer and trust,
The thunder shall be hushed—the hail shall cease—
That thou mayest know how earth is God's, not thine !
And yet I know ye will not fear him then,
Thy servants nor thyself, when all is past."
With this prediction, Moses strode away,
Leaving the precincts to implore of Heaven
Alliance needed. Thus the storm was stayed ;
But still unblushing, the false king denied
The people freedom, as their Chief foretold.

Again inspired, that champion of Truth
Confronted the pretender high in place,
And fearless of reproof proclaimed aloud :

"Thus saith the God of Israel to man,
How long wilt thou refuse to bend thyself
Before Me? Let My people take the way
That they may serve Me. Else, if thou refuse,
A day and locusts will invade thy coast!
And they shall fall upon the face of earth
So that one cannot see the shade thereof;—
What hath escaped the horrors of late plagues,
Aught that remaineth in the ground for you,
Shall be devoured by them! And they shall fill
Thy houses to the last that hails thy sway;
Neither thy fathers nor their ancestors
Have seen such thro' times past unto this day."
Expressed, he turned from Pharaoh, and was gone;
When Egypt's servitors impatient said:
"How long shall this man be a snare to us?
Let the men go, that they may serve their God!
Know'st thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?"
So the declaimers moved their imbecile,
To summon Moses, and address him thus:
"Go, serve the Lord, your God! but who will leave?"
And Moses answered: "Both our young and old;
Our sons and daughters; with our flocks and herds
Will we go out; for such is Heaven's feast."
Then vanity supreme of earth rejoined:
"Let Heaven be so with you, as I concede—
Your little ones—beware, for evil awaits—
Not so! but go ye men, and serve the Lord;
For that ye did desire." The despot then

Had Moses driven from his troubled sight;
But scorned the judgment, till from distant parts
Arose that east wind, herald of the plague
Which passed all others in severity.
Out of their districts in the far unknown,
Thronged ravenous millions winged for violence;
Whose armies under mystic government,
In sable masses shrouded half the sky.
Deliberate myriads, while the wind they ride,
A cloud impregnable they shut out light.
Descending noiseless, dense, and ominous,
The impacted pirates covered everything—
The land was darkened—as consumed by fire,
Fruit, herb and leaf were eaten—there remained
After their onslaught, not a verdant sign
Thro' all the land of Egypt. What escaped
The sky's artillery, met destruction now.
Eager the king for Moses called; to whom
With pitiable mouthings fear appealed;
"Against your God and you I have sinned indeed!
Yet pray thee once again forgive my sin,
And supplicate the Lord to take away
Only this death from me." The silent sage
Departed, and design Omnipotent
Sent a strong gale whose broad wings swept the pests
Even to where the swallowing Red Sea rolled.

Still freedom was denied. Eternal power
Extended darkness over all the realm,

So palpable, that for three days labor ceased—
Men saw not one another—dismal doubts
Settled upon the tedium of rest.
What stirs the sensitive to such extent,
As lengthened gloom—while solitary thought,
Forever active, vapors into form
Long lines of terrors ghastly as they crowd
Upon the morbid fancies? Mind is apt
To associate illusion with the real;
To shudder at vague demons clothed in night,
Trooping infernal thro' the dusky air.
From out oppressive silence whispers stole,
Dread as the imagery surrounding all,
Restrained but to enjoy poor mortal's fright
Before their dark destruction was begun.
But Satan's satrap, more than other slave,
Shrank from the emblem of his moral state:
Like many a monster in his visions shaped,
He writhed, or so his fiery eyeballs glared,
That, often as he saw him glassed, there crept
A coward from his own grim looks away.
Desperate, he for Moses sent once more,
And groaned from swollen organ of deceit:
"Go, serve the Lord! but let your flocks be stayed;
Your little ones shall also go with you."
"But," Moses said, "thou shalt allow as well,
Our stock for sacrifice. The cattle owned
Shall go with us—no hoof shall stay behind;
For thereof must we take to serve our God!
Nor know we how until we thither come."

The swarthy monarch, swelling black with rage
At this dictation, furious exclaimed :
"Get thee from me, and to thyself take heed !
Cross not my sight again—for in that day
Thou seest my face, thou shalt as surely die !"
Calm Moses answered : "Thou hast spoken well—
I never more will look upon thy face."
No epic hero from a suffering foe
Ever retired with easier dignity,
Than now graced Hebrew greatness. He went forth
To treat with Heaven on his future course.
Assured that gloomier than all plagues before
Death on pollution's offspring must descend
With such grim measure, from the afflicted land
Those captive hosts, coupled so long with ills,
Would pass to freedom—aye, be driven thence.
To Pharaoh's servants he announced the same ;
But vain their admonitions. Favor found
In borrowing from Egyptians what they gained
Thro' years of Hebrew slavery unpaid,
Was taken as necessary recompense
To fit the exigence of time—a beam
Of equity judicial mind sustained,
To balance interests and direct reward.—
Communion of the Spirit over life
Upon things following, held the Israelite
In rapt suspense of action. Solitude
Seemed for a time his choosing, tho' the soul
Was never less alone—associate, blessed
Throughout, with purposes Divine for man.

BOOK VIII.

By nature's Mind instructed, Moses marked
The year beginning with that month when seed
Is scattered in the soil, whence Winter's damps
And violent throes renew initial life.
Now Israel's congregation was enjoined
Upon the tenth day to make sacrifice,
And till the fortieth to observe this feast
With paschal offering to Omnipotence ;
While ready for their journey, staff in hand,
With girded loins, and shoes upon their feet,
They waited Heaven's delivery in faith.
Doomed tho' the enemies of virtue were,
Exception thro' observance of the chaste
In cleanliness of members and of food,
Was Israel's favor. The dread Visitor
Would pass their lintels, nor molest their watch,
On that fell mission when the sons of sin
Were to fall helpless from excess and pride.
The bunch of hyssop which the poor employed
To spatter chastened blood upon their posts,
Was to remain a figure thro' all time
Of sacred recognition.
Draped in night,
The habitations of unheeding men
Presaged that mournful sequence imminent.

Soon must eyes pitiless with sorrow melt,
And stony hearts shrink at the gripe of woe;
For midnight frowns, as noiseless under shroud
Comes Death — the dreadful monarch of all shades.
Wide-staring eyes that see not what they blight,
Beneath his awful brows are set—no sound
Is known to him—touch, every sense is lost
Upon the cold destroyer. Not a sign
Directs attendant phantoms—where he moves,
The same dark act must end their various spells.
With some, fantastic Fever cheats the brain,
Bearing poor fancy through illumined heights
Only to dash it into horror's depths.
On others, Agony relentless falls,
Until the victim senses sink benumbed,
No longer serving torture. Ghastly Fear
Steals round the shuddering mortal, and distorts
Most simple visions, calling terrors up,
That draw chill sweat from every trembling pore.
Or Palsy shackles as with weighty chain
The struggling organs, helpless while they strive,
Fierce to resume their functions, but in vain.
These spectres entered polished palaces,
And halls and hovels indiscriminate,
Followed by wasting Grief and wild Despair,
Till wails and groans and shrieks as moments told
The dolorous measure of that dismal hour.
Thro' passages obscure they dimly swept,
Whereto Death leading passed; some, lingering still

To torture those surviving as the doomed.

Roused, Pharaoh and his host alarmed the night,
Their cry, like ocean tumult, spreading far
To Egypt's boundaries. Gloom's bosom heaved
With the great woe—each house its dead deplored—
Disaster seemed the sudden fate of all.
Stricken, the tyrant sent swift messengers,
Even then thro' darkness, to bid Moses go
With Israel's children and their property,
Forth from among his people as they wished:
Only to leave a blessing after them.
More urgent, the Egyptians made them haste,
Lest all should die who were not of that faith;
So with their dough unleavened in the troughs,
Wrapped round with clothes upon their shoulders bound,
The Hebrew bands (rewarded to depart)
Went out—six hundred thousand men on foot—
And journeyed from Rameses. Succoth reached,
They baked unleavened cakes; no victuals else
Had they prepared, such hurry spurred their flight.
But freedom cheered the way, and no regret
Disturbed them. Through the safer wilderness
They marched—an army, yet avoiding war,
Lest evil should assail, and timid ones
Repent their move from slavery, and return.
Can those who liberate themselves from sin
Be over cautious when a point is gained

Of some advantage, while new strength exults,
Sanguine of greater victories, but unsafe?
Pursuit of dangerous test is never wise,
Even where the outcome is commendable.

The Chief whose labor led his people free,
Brought Joseph's bones from Egypt; honoring
The pledge prophetic. They encamped ere long
At Etham; for the Lord before them went
In pillar cloud by day to lead the way,
And nightly in like form of guiding light.
Between the sea and Migdol, as ordained,
They spread their camps extensive. Meanwhile pride
Incensed the Egyptian monarch and his men,
When told their slaves had fled. Abroad at once
Equipped for vengeance, in their chariots swift
His chosen warriors followed his pursuit,
Their foaming steeds o'ertaking Israel soon,
Which, drawing nigh, sent terror to the hearts,
Weak in their trust of Heaven. They cried out
To God and His interpreter: "Because
There were no graves in Egypt, hast thou brought
Us here to die—wherefore hast thou dealt thus?
Did we not say to thee, 'Let us alone,
That we may serve the Egyptians?' Better then
To have served our masters than to perish here,
Helpless, unpitied in the wilderness."
But calmly Moses thus replied to all:
"Fear not. Be still—submissive unto Heaven!

And witness the salvation of the Lord
Which will be shown to you. Tho' ye have seen
Your enemies to-day, yet never more
Shall ye behold them : Mercy's elements
Assume the battle—only keep your peace."
Now God impressed His agent to command
By the mere motion of an outstretched arm,
His frightened multitude. The cloud before
Their course directing now behind them moved—
To those forbidding gloom ; to these a light ;
So, thro' the night they neither saw nor met.
Then Power divine impelled the strong east wind
That checked the flowing waves. A passage firm
Thro' the suspended waters was vouchsafed
While Israel's children passed their boundary.
But when the Egyptians in pursuit arrived,
Their cumbersome vehicles in the midst
Resisted management, wheels useless proved,
And such afflictions followed, they were fain
To counsel for retreat, some murmuring :
" Let us not meet but flee from Israel's face,
Since Heaven fighteth against us for them."
Vain time and place to hesitate—that hand
Extended where the Hebrew bands stood safe,
Pointed to dire catastrophe. The tides
Burst sudden from confinement, and o'erwhelmed
Men, horses, chariots—the tyrant's host
In wild confusion of the waves went down
To death disastrous, lost below the flood.

So loud the Hebrew song of gratitude
Attested God's deliverance, steeps and plains
For miles around re-echoed long to Heaven.
But while a mob exulted in revenge,
The emancipator tendered only praise
To Justice, for salvation of the tribes.
With eyes averted from that fatal shore
Whereon some few of Egypt's dead lay strewn,
Devotion for the many moved him thus:
"Unto the Lord triumphant I will sing!
Who hath thrown power and pride into the sea.
He is my strength and song—He is become
My Savior! Sovereign Friend—I will prepare
For Him a habitation in my breast!
I would exalt Him as my father's God.
He entereth even war, therein is Lord!
The pomp of Pharaoh sank before his face;
Nor yet could chosen officers survive.
The depths have swallowed them. Thy hand, O Lord,
Showeth glorious Might—hath dashed the enemy
To naught. Thou sendest forth Thy wrath, and lo—
They are consumed as stubble. At Thy blast
The floods stood upright as a heap congealed.
Our foe said, 'I will follow, overtake,
And then divide the spoil; to glut my lust
Upon them, with the sword I will destroy.'
Thy breath swept down, and ocean covered them!
They sank as lead beneath the mighty waves.
Who likens Thee, O Lord, among their gods?

Thy law confused them, and the earth devoured.
In mercy Thou hast led a people forth,
Redeemed; their Guide unto Thy holy plain.
The selfish world shall hear and be afraid!
The dukes of Edom thence shall turn amazed,
Those mightiest in Moab shake with fear;
Aye, even must Canaan's numbers melt away!
For dread shall make them motionless as stone,
Until the people pass, O Lord, until
In safety they pass over as Thou will'st.
To Thine inheritance shall they be brought,—
That sanctuary of eternal state,
Wherein Thou shalt forever reign the Lord."
And Aaron's sister, Miriam, went forth
With timbrel in her hand, thus singing joy
To all the dancing women following her:
"Sing ye to God—for He hath glorious won!
The horse and rider hath He overthrown."

So Moses led the thousands unto Shur;
A wilderness where water was not found
Thro' three days' journey. Nor when they had come
To Marah could they drink its bitter pool.
Then murmured the ungrateful multitude
Against their silent leader. Impudent
They counseled; asking him, "What shall we drink?"
And he to eternal Wisdom turned his thought,
Inclined upon a tree, whose portions cast
Into the waters sweetened them. Hereon,

He made for man an ordinance of proof,
And said: "If thou wilt diligent attend
Unto the Voice all mighty—eloquent
As nature's Spirit—and wilt do but that
Which in the sight of God is right, and hear
To His commandments, no distress
Shall come upon thee, such as evil brought
Upon the Egyptians; for He is the Lord
That healeth all afflictions."—Soon they came
To Elim, blest with water and sweet shades;
And there contented, they encamped awhile.

Thence journeying, Israel's congregation reached
The wilderness of Sin; and here again
Unfaithful thousands muttered mean distrust
Against the Chief and Aaron. Weak they wailed:
"O would to God we had died in Egypt, where
We sat beside the flesh pots, when we ate
Bread to the full; for ye have brought us out
Into this wilderness, to starve by lot.—"
None know but those who, masters of their kind,
Devote the labors of whole lives to win
Some good or vantage for their fellowmen,
How much the stupid censure of a race
Tries struggling spirit, when it may not serve
All individual moments and desires.
So far the influence of Satan tends
With flattering jeer to lift the louts of earth,
Up to at least a plane of insolence

Where senseless they confront superiors,
Mind need not wonder that so very few
Great in ability, their friendship deign,
And take coarse insult as a recompense.—
Urged, Aaron spoke as follows to the throng:
"At Even ye shall know it was the Lord
Who brought you out of Egypt! Morning's ray
Will light His glory to the sight of all!
For He hath heard your murmurs! What are we
That ye pronounce against us?" Moses then,
Indignant tho' he was, thus shaped his words:
"The Lord shall give you in the evening, flesh;
And with the morning bread to eat in full—
Hearing your doubts at Providence expressed—
They pit not us, but are against your God."
Before the night, quails fluttering came in flocks,
That filled the camp where famine threatened late;
And when the morning dew was taken up,
Behold, upon the breast of earth there lay
A small round thing, as hoar frost on the ground.
Now gloated numbers speechless; others praised
The bounteous evidence of Love divine;
But knowing not its strange significance,
They called it manna. When their Chief was sought,
He said, while triumph gave his eye command:
"This is the bread which God hath given you!
Hence, so let His commandment be obeyed—
Gather it, every man as need dictates,
And for those waiting in the tents provide.

Let none reserve it for a second day,
But trust to Heaven." Notwithstanding this,
Some left a mess for morning, and it stank
And bred foul worms. Then Moses showered his wrath
Upon the faithless. Every morning thence
They gathered fresh; yet when the sixth day dawned,
Each took a double quantity, and sent
Word of the same to Moses. Pleased he said:
"The Lord hath ruled To-morrow as our rest
Of holy Sabbath sacred unto Him!
After your baking of to-day lay up
What shall remain for food thro' Sabbath tide."
While most obeyed the mandate, yet a few,
By Satan made incredulous, at fault
Went out to gather on the seventh day,
But found no blessing for their selfish pains.
Thus Moses spoke God's reprimand again:
"How long refuse ye to observe and keep
My laws and just commandments? Since the Lord
Hath given you the Sabbath, therefore bread
He giveth on the sixth for two days' food!
Reflect upon the occasion every man—
Let no one leave his place upon the seventh."
Thencefoith they sanctified that day with rest;
And Moses ordered Aaron to prepare
A vessel chaste, in which a measure full
Of manna might be kept for coming time,
As testimonial to posterity
Of Providence and man's dependent years.

For long and numerous seasons passed, before
The pilgrims came to land inhabited;
And until Canaan's borders had been reached,
They lived but by the gracious showers from Heaven—
Pure as new-fallen snow, like honey sweet,
Inviting labor with promoted zest.

At Rephidim they thirsted so, the worst
Chiding their liberator, thus began:
"Give us that we may drink!" And Moses crossed:
"Why chide with me—wherefore tempt ye the Lord?"
But thousands suffering such a drought severe,
Would not be slaked nor silenced by a word;
Their murmurings likened in united force
That grumbling of the ground forerunning shocks
Of violent revolution. Moses grieved,
Cried unto Heaven: "Lord what shall I do
Unto this people? They be almost driven
To stone me." Then the Spirit bade him haste
Before the numbers, and take on with him
The elders wise of Israel, and proceed
With rod in hand to Horeb, on whose rock
Divine power would be figured visible.
Induced to smite the flinty mass, it poured
Like wounded giant crystal liquid forth,
In sight of Israel's sages. To this place
He gave the name of Massah and Meribah,
Because of Hebrew doubting when they asked,
Is God among us (as our Friend) or not?'

Here Amalek with plundering bands appeared,
And challenged Israel to battle fierce.
Nor long had Wisdom's active to select
A man whose courage and discretion swayed
In equal balance the decisive mind.
On Joshua, the son of Nun, endowed
As few with powers essential to control,
Strong as his will, yet prudent, calm and safe,
The choice of Moses in a moment fixed,
And thus imposed authority and trust :
" Choose, Joshua, from among us, worthy men,
And make advance to fight this Amalek !
To-morrow on the hill-top I will stand
Directing in my hand the rod of God."
So Joshua, leading hundreds, breasted war
Against the greedy Amalek. In sight
Stood Moses and his aids in counsel wise,
Aaron and Hur, commanding every move.
Now while the faith of Moses held his hand
Outstretched above them, Israel prevailed ;
But soon as faltering it fell weakly down,
The adversaries fresh advantage gained.
First Joshua with his sword of righteousness
Burst thro' the ranks of Amalek, and slew
Wide as the weapon circled shuddering foes.
But next, his threatened followers gave way,
As Hebrew confidence deserted them,
And tangled in disorder, hundreds fell,
While groans and curses choked the ruffian rout.

Above, exact in figure, weighed a hand,
Supported finally by two beside;
Symbolical of faith that now and then
Required assistance to uphold it still.
What more resembles the excursive flights
Of hope from Aaron sweeping o'er the field,
Or trust of Hur, superior midst the fray,
Or faith which rose from Moses to the sky,
But eager-winged sought struggling earth again,
Than fabled goddesses of ancient verse,
Engaged about their favorites in war?
Nor is it questioned that such aid is felt
By those who battle for most holy right;
They never can be vanquished, tho' each charge
Repulsed, their siege extend thro' centuries.
On one hand Aaron pictured triumph thus:
"O brother, let not gloomy doubt disturb
Our vision—golden as the dawn of day
After night's crowding shadows, shall arrive
Resplendent victory—as many throats
As warble joy to morning soon will chant
Glad pæans full of glory to the Lord."
"Fond kinsman," he was answered, "thou art blest
With fervor that might liven or mislead
The sternest of reflections! Yet I own,
For all alarm wherein so much depends,
Thine influence sustains me—pressed by Love
To stimulate my weaker moods." He spoke,
And gazed the moment tenderly upon

His ardent relative; but studious Hur
Had watched significant the strife below,
And measured probabilities, when thus
To Moses, tho' not facing him, he said:
"Seest thou yon narrow band of Israelites
To right in quarter-circle closing now?
A moment since and by a move inverse,
They bent the foe back, falling to the rear.
If they but follow this manœuvre through,
It needs must break the enemy. Observe,
Our thickest column makes advance in front;
And harassed, threatened at extremities,
Ere many measures pass, the mass opposed
Will crumble in disorder and be swept
To doom their plundering leader most deserves."
"Ah, still thy judgment works," the seer replied,
"Plain, practical, but safer to belief.
Sustained by either, should I not exalt
That gracious Power investing friendship so?
Bear with me, kind companions, if at times
I tremble for these many lives.—But see!
Who, like a comet trailing numerous sparks,
Rushes with such swift fury that mine eyes
Take not his flashing movements? What wild fear
Around, before him spreads! His sword is flame,
Blighting at distance what it leaps towards!
Our foes shrink withering as blades of grass
Along his dreadful path—to Amalek!
Now, robber, meet thy fate—nay, dost thou turn?

Too late discretion urges thee—a stroke,
As lightning darted, and thy crown is cleft
Deep to the parted tongue, whence guttural groans
Bubble their way thro' blood. Ere thou canst sink,
An ear on either shoulder rests. Sad thought,
That one so darkened to the shades must pass.
And who stands victor? O grand Joshua!
Long generations in memorial
Shall read how thou hast conquered Satan's thrall,
As God eternal wars with Amalek."
While yet he gloried, the surviving few
From their slain principal for safety fled.
Then panting heroes pause to breathe or shout;
In song the soul of Israel expands:
The vale's refrain is answered from the hill,
Whence beaming, three auspicious figures come:
The mother's breast with new-found courage thrills,
And childhood wondering forgets to fear.
But Moses, high in honor of his God,
Erected here an altar, naming it
Jehovah-nissi for Omnipotence.

When Jethro heard how much the Lord had done
For Moses and the people, he repaired
With sad Zipporah and her sons to meet
The sire of many miracles. They neared
Their journey's end ere Moses was informed;
But gracious he went forth, and greeting them,
Bent to his second father with respect,

And then embraced him. Each the other asked
Of welfare since they parted. To his tent
The Chieftain welcomed them, where ample spread
Such cheerful comfort, they were soon at ease.
Reclining Jethro listened to his son,
Whose whole recital warmed in Wisdom's praise—
How Pharaoh had resisted; how he fell,
With all his agencies of transient power.
Continuing, Moses told the many pains
That had beset them on the way; but closed
By thanking God for their deliverance.
Old age rejoiced, and rising leaned upon
The arm of manhood, while devotion voiced:
"Blessed be the Lord, Who hath delivered you
Out of the grasping hand of tyranny—
From under tribute to Egyptian greed.
Now One I know is greater than all gods!
For midst the pride wherein they vainly dwelt,
He ruled above them." Honor stopped not there;
As, after manners of the time, a feast
In sacrifice by Jethro was arranged;
And Aaron with the eld of Israel came
To share symbolical before the Lord.
Prayer claimed the reverent, discourse the wise;
Joy without merriment shone forth from all;
That halo constant to immortal faith,
Hung radiant over them as Heaven's glance.
The day devoted, tho' precisely spent,
Left for the morrow trials manifold;

So numbers stood from morning until dark,
Waiting where Moses sat to judge their claims.
Beside him Jethro, pensive, and with brow
That wrinkled deeper as the day wore on
Without fair promise of complete discharge,
Counseled his son-in-law, thus questioning first:
"What bids this thing thou doest to the throng—
Why sittest thou alone, requiring scores
To stand by thee from morning until even?"
Taxed, Moses answered him in undertone:
"Because they seek me to inquire of God—
When they have any matter in dispute,
They come before me, and I judge between
One and another; thus I make them know
The laws of God and ethic principles."
"Thy course is not judicious!" Age returned.
"Thou'lt surely wear thyself and them. Indeed,
The duty is too heavy for one mind—
Thou art not able to perform so much.
Hearken now unto counsel I will give,
And Light shall clear thy way! Be thou for them
To Godward, that thou mayest bring the appeals
Unto His high tribunal. Thou shalt teach
By ordinance, and show the way wherein
The people are to walk. Moreover, choose
Such able men as fear God—men of truth,
Despising Selfishness; place these above
As heads of thousands, hundreds, fifties, tens;
And let them judge the masses at all times,

Except in matters great, which they shall bring
Before thee ; all things trivial let them weigh :
So shall it be made easier for thyself,
And they will bear with thee. If to this won,
And God command thee, then thou shalt endure,
While even the lowest find their place in peace."
Not words of flattery to frounce assent,
Came from the thoughtful magistrate—next day
He complimented best his senior's mind,
By choosing Israel's ablest men, for aids
To administer the thousand equities
Required in such a concourse. Thus great suits
Were brought to Moses, but inferior claims
Decided by his chosen arbiters.
Now Jethro, for departure well prepared,
Took leave of Moses ; and their eyes grew moist,
As, whispering counsel or in last embrace,
The noble natures offered secret prayer
For either's future unity with Love.
They parted—Moses, moody to his tent,
And Jethro, duteous to his distant land.

From Rephidim the multitudes arrived
At Sinai, wild and desolate. There pitched,
Before the sacred Mount their camp spread out,
And rest indulgent followed weariness.
Here Inspiration from the mountain called
Unto the people's leader, deigning thus :
" Say to the house of Jacob, Ye have seen

What Heaven let fall upon your enemies ;
God lifted as on eagle wings the free,
And brought you graciously unto Himself.
Now, therefore, if ye keep His covenant,
Ye shall be worthiest in sacred Sight ;
For, saith Jehovah, all the earth is Mine !
Yet shall ye rise a kingdom unto Me
Of priests—a holy nation, guiding men."
These words before the elders given clear,
Met answer swelling from a million throats
In one great sound—the people's common voice,
Attesting zeal that echoed to the sky.
But Moses inwardly communed with God,
And Wisdom cautioned : Lo, I come by Will
To thee in thickest cloud, that they may hear
My converse with thee, and believe for aye.
This thought returned to them, Truth's messenger
Down from the Mount unto his people went ;
And, as directed, they were made prepare
In cleanliness, being sanctified by him,
Before the third day's advent. Bounds were set,
Beyond which all took warning not to pass,
Lest curious or incredulous they touch
That sanctity surrounding heavenly rites,
Charged with dread penalty of sudden death.

The morning of the third came, heralded
By Heaven's awful trumpet—thunderous,
Reverberating far thro' rocked expanse.

Sharp lightnings flashed, or, joined in steady beam,
Illumined sacred Sinai's smoking heights,
Whose bosom heaved as laboring with the birth
Of God's great issue soon to be announced.
Then Moses brought the trembling numbers forth
To meet their God, and witness power divine;
Ranging them wisely by the mountain's base.
And when Might's trumpet sounded long and loud,
While rumbling thunder shook the massive earth,
High as his voice the faith of Moses soared,
Even to its sovereign Spirit. Called, he ascends
That Eminence which like an altar vast,
Burns consecrated with transcendent fire;
Nor doubts the Almighty moving overhead,
Whose grand descent appalls the hosts below.
Up to the summit Love appoints his way,
And there impressing moral sense begins:
I am the Lord thy God, that brought thee forth,
Out of the place of bondage. Thou shalt have
No other God before Me. Make not thine
To worship any image, or the like
Of thing in heaven above or earth below
Or that is in the water under earth.
Thou shalt not bow thyself to them nor serve!
For I am jealous of Mine own for good,
Visiting the iniquity of sires
Upon descendants to the third and fourth
Of them that scorn Me, to reclaim My world.
Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain:

Who uttereth such will not be free from guilt.
Six days shall work continue: but the seventh,
Being sabbath unto Heaven, thou shalt keep free
From labor—thee and thine and all thou own'st.
For in like time the Lord made heaven and earth,
And sanctified the seventh day to rest.—
Honor thy father and thy mother fond!
That thou mayest live long prosperous in the land
Which God hath given thee.—Thou shalt not kill.—
Thou shalt not sink unto adultery.—
Thou shalt not steal.—Thou shalt not bear false word
Against thy neighbor. Neither shalt thou covet
Thy neighbor's property in bond or use.
Thus Truth inspired the man miraculous,
Plainly commanding from the first to last,
Against those selfish ends which Satan's power
Depends so on for mastering mankind.
That personal homage foolish pride maintains,
Or worship given to art or things of wealth,
Was, while forbidden, coupled with entail
Of wretched generations. Blasphemy,
Strange arrogance indifferent to God,
As prayer for evil was prohibited.
Then thrift commended but redeemed from greed,
Blest with a space for rest and reverence,
Defined the boon that civilized a world,
Withheld from recreative thought before.
The glorious trait of gratitude was shown
In filial love exhorted; its reward

Even promised here, hath ever been fulfilled.
But merest mention served to interdict
Such henious crimes as murder and foul lust,
Sufficiently atrocious in their names:
As theft, against the common sense of right,
Required no descant for its sound unjust.
False testimony, scandal, deadly lies,
Received their sentence from presiding Love,
Who dealt the final blow at Selfishness,
Forbidding men to covet even the goods
Or titles of their fellows. Penalties,
And points that touched on customs of the times,
Were treated in detail; hence many days
Went by while Moses, like a poet rapt
At famed ethereal height, remained above,
Writing for man's ennoblement and need,
Each law and ordinance of common life.
Meanwhile the people, by perdition's imp
Turned faithless and impatient, cried to Aaron:
"Up, give us gods, which shall before us go!
For as to this man Moses, once obeyed,
We wot not now what is become of him."
And Aaron, who was set apart to serve
His people in the office high of priest,
Weakly directed them to break such gold
As drooped in ornament from many an ear,
And bring the mass to him; with which he made
A molten calf, and graved it fanciful.
Idolatrous as blatant, hundreds sang:

"These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought
Thee out of Egypt." Aaron at the sight,
Instead of weeping, built for it a shrine;
Proclaiming as a feast the following day,
When this base idol should be hailed as God.
Compute the millions that have worshipped since,
The self-same emblem of imagined power,
And this sad episode of Hebrew faith
Seems but a prophecy to after years.

Arising early, shameless numbers flocked
To novel worship, where burnt offerings
Exhaled the stench of sacrilege. There squat,
They gorged and drank immoderate in mirth,
And rose up frivolous to dance and play.
Restraint no longer held them. Some indulged
Wild fits in figures whose immodesty
Disgusted or surprised associate clowns;
Tho' none were prudent in that sinful throng.
Such was the scene, when Moses warned by Heaven,
Descended from the Mount with Joshua,
Who thus to his superior anxious spoke:
"A noise, I fear, of war is in the camp,"
To whom Love's bearer of the laws replied:
"Not such the voice that shouts for mastery,
Nor the sad cry of warriors overcome;
I hear the simple sounds of them that sing."
But soon as nigh the camp they came, and saw
The golden calf—the intoxicated mob,

Obscenity and dancing—anger waxed
Hot in the breast of Moses. Down he cast
Those tables which the Lord had given in faith,
Out of his hands and broke them on the ground.
He took their idol, burnt it in the fire,
And ground it to a powder which was strewn
Upon the water. This he made them drink,
As fit contempt for their unworthy rites.
"What did this people unto thee," he asked,
Turning on Aaron his resentful eyes,
"That thou hast brought them to so great a sin?"
Affected, Aaron wept, yet pleading soft:
"Let not the anger of my lord wax hot!
Thou knowest the people, weak to mischief prone
For said they unto me, 'Contrive us gods,
To go before us! as for him that led,
We know not now what is become of him.'
I said to them, Whoso hath any gold,
Let them break off the charms most dearly prized.
So me they gave what into fire I cast
And there came out this calf. It was to shame
And strip them to the common view I planned."
But Moses saw in nakedness their fall,
And that of thousands with those treacherous,
Unless the drove afflicted be stamped out,
Tho' hard that feeling, when he ordered thus:
"Who on the Lord's side battles, draw unto me!"
And all the sons of Levi gathered round.
Then he commanded them: "Thus saith the Lord,

Put every man his weapon by his side,
And go throughout the camp from gate to gate;
Slay every heretic, brother tho' he be,
Or loved companion, who is false to Heaven."
Stern as the order rang, it was obeyed ;
No malice entered the ensuing strife,
But thirty hundreds of the people fell.
For Moses had forewarned them : "Consecrate
Yourselves this day to God, even every man
Upon his son or brother, if required ;
That Justice may descend unto the just."
Such was the rigid reason of the Chief ;
Like some firm surgeon lopping off disease
From healthier members ere infection spread.
Yet when with Joshua he reached his tent,
And flung himself despondent down, and tossed
As one demented, tho' no tears were shed,
Groans struggled from the bosom of despair,
That muttered like a mockery of his voice :
" Alas—for all our greatest efforts passed—
Our partial victories—refulgent hopes !
Vain are endeavors for a thoughtless race—
Advantage ruins the untoward mob.
Show men bright promise, and like dazzled moths
They dash to their destruction. I have done.
After the vigorous labors of a life
Devoted to their welfare, there is left
Nothing to look for, but contending grades
Of degradation. So, let memory

Of my sad failure, perish with the hour—
I may not even claim reward of Heaven."
But Joshua, commonly of silent choice,
While moved ingenuous at once replied:
"O friend! Hast thou lost heart because a few
Of many thousands in thine absence dared
To break allegiance—traitors well chastised—
Thou, to whose will, tact, courage of the past,
We owe advantages which none but Love
Could have inspired, none carried out but thee?
Where is that settled confidence long thine,
Which held thee up against forbidding odds?
Victorious leaders must be patient, brave,
Else must reverses close all weak events!
Never rests triumph where a fear remains."
Still rage from disappointment thus found way:
"No, it was madness to expect in men—
Poor willing subjects of the evil one—
Either fulfilment or respect of good.
Glozed, wheedled by that spirit, every slave
By tyranny of will exalts himself
Above all others—over general weal!
Nor matters much what vanity desires,
If to originate or ape conceit,
Nor whether honor, gratitude dissuade;
Senseless they rush—no common interest
Is recognized. They are a pack of wolves
That feed on one another, and imbrute
Their offspring. What assurance hath the mind

To hope for aught but a continuance
Of this day's infamy? It crazes me
To speak, to think upon the sacrilege."
Nervously rising he, with eyes aflame,
Brushed by his friend as tho' the inclosure choked,
And he for breath must gain the open air.
But not beyond the curtained passage thence
Cared he to go. There, calm as evening shades
Came down and closed around him silently,
The tumult of his passions sank allayed.
In thought stood Joshua considerate,
Before he joined the melancholy man;
And even then from doubtful speech refrained,
Till Moses broke the silence, sadly thus:
"How like dark fears these shadows steal about
And press upon us—captured unaware,
As buried quite, black horror folds our shroud!
Ah, Joshua, when that emblem bright of God
Deserts this world, what terrors fill the space
Between, ere its return to light and heat!"
He sighed concluding, while his comrade's hope
Prompted the following: "Yet can'st thou say,
The sun departed hath forsaken us?
Who knows, dear friend, but that, our view reversed,
We turn away from Heaven's steadfast light;
Till, by its influence, necessity,
Recalled we face again our vigor's fount?
Behold, how timely from yon cloud ascends
That glorious orb, whose silvery peaceful rays

Flow friendly over Earth's dark countenance !
Perhaps with given beams it is ordained
To follow truant nature, turned aside
From the great visual source of light and life.
Likely, O soul magnanimous, be thou
To recreant Israel a minister,
From Mercy sent to cheer us thro' our night
Until Love's dawning brings eternal day ! "
He had not done, when Moses pressed his hand
And trembled with emotions wakened thus :
"Kind, brave associate—to win in war
Hath been thy merit above other men;
But thou hast conquered in far nobler way
The furious passions of a frantic breast !
The sky provides new weapons for thy tongue,
Resistless—thou art born to victory !
And what is mortal yields to thine advance.
While mastering, thou hast fortified my heart:
A warm conviction rules it. Who but thee,
Is worthy of my trust in Israel ?
Could I be sure thy voice surviving mine
Would still direct the people, I could die
Content in spite of evil memories.
Say thou wilt give, my Joshua, thy life
To guidance of our common family—
O, deem these hands anointing thee endowed !
For Wisdom fills thy spirit with control."
The head which bowed in reverence to receive
That gracious touch confirmed by act devout;

And so they parted, silently rejoiced,
As grateful prayer engrossed the soul of each,
And led to peaceful rest which Love composed.
When morning wakened, Moses called the tribes,
And said to them assembled: "Great your sin
Before the Lord, for just atonement calls;
Therefore will I go up unto His height,
To offer sad, repentant prayers for you."
He spoke, not that contrition of the just
Would answer as atonement in his faith,
For wickedness in others, but to shame
The sources of idolatry, unfit
To shape prayer worthily; besides constrained
To assert importance requisite to rule.
From this time on, the majesty of God
More perfectly impressed the Hebrew mind;
Distinct His spiritual attributes
Above material nature moved supreme.
Nor were obedient forces bent before,
But the high Will directing them adored.
The tables whereon Truth incribed His law,
Renewed, were brought by Moses from the Mount,
With divine promise that their enemies
Would vanish from before them. Warned again
To keep from contact with the slaves of sin,
All Israel loyal to God's covenant,
Put off their costly raiment, gems and gold,
To frame a shrine of sacrifice for Love.

Long labored Moses to enumerate
The various lines of Jacob's growing tribes,
And give them order as their merits claimed;
But finally the record was compiled,
Concise as former efforts of his hand.
Thro' all their wanderings afterwards, disturbed
By lust, rebellion, plagues, and trying wars,
They bowed to God alone; while other men
Worshipped gross, brutal and insensate things.
Faith rested where the tabernacle borne
Instructed them to follow and abide,
Ever till Canaan promised should be pressed
By those deserving of the heritage:
And tho' a rule of might that era gloomed,
Compelling heartless action for success,
The great lawgiver taught humanity
As likeliest to so perverse a state—
Miraculous considering the age.

At last—ere leaving them for good, he sang:
"Attend, ye heavens, hear my voice, O earth!
My creed shall drop as rain, my speech distil
As dew upon the tender herb, as showers
Upon the grass! Because I will announce
The holy name of God—greatness ascribe
Unto our Lord. He is the Rock—His work
Is perfect: for in judgment He proceeds—
A Lord of truth without iniquity!
Justice and Love and Wisdom are in Him.—

The people are corrupted selfishly;
Their spot is not the mark of His devout!
A crooked genèration frets the sight.
And do ye thus requite the Lord your God,
O, foolish people and unwise? Who else
Is Father owning ye? Hath He not made
And even established all? Remember ye
The days of old, consider years gone by!
Ask of thy Father that He may instruct—
Thy elders ask, and they will tell to thee.
When the Most High divided to His sons
Their portions, when He made them separate,
He limited according to the sum
Of Israel's children with mankind at large:
For Jacob is the Lord's inheritance.
He found him in a desert land, a waste
And howling wilderness; whence guiding him,
He kept him as the apple of his eye.
Even as an eagle stirreth up her nest,
And fluttereth above her young, with wings
Spread forth to bear them on their early flight,
The Lord alone so led him—no strange god
Was with him. Love and Wisdom made him ride
On the high places of the earth, to eat
Increase from generous fields; He gave his mouth
Honey and oil out of the flinty rock;
Butter of kine, and milk of sheep bestowed,
With fat of lambs, and rams of Bashan breed,
And goats, with fattening meats of fruit and wheat;

And thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.
But Jeshurun was overfed and kicked—
Grown fat and thick, then he forsook his God,
And light esteemed the Rock of his salvation.
With strange gods men provoked Love's jealousy,
And with abominations woke to wrath.
They sacrificed to devils, not to God ;
To gods unknown, to what came newly up,
To whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock
Thou art unmindful, thou hast remembered not
God that created thee. When Heaven beheld,
Abhorrence moved because His children sinned.
And Truth said, I will hide my face from them,
And I will see their end : for they are turned
A generation froward and self-willed,
Children in whom there is no faith. They have moved
My jealousy with that which is not God ;
They have provoked Me with their vanities :
And I will move them still to jealousy
With those that are not as a people held ;
I will provoke them with a foolish nation.
For fire is kindled in Mine enmity
That shall burn on unto the lowest hell,
And shall consume the earth with her increase,
Till the foundations of the mountains smoke.
Mischiefs like arrows will I spend on them ;
And burnt with hunger and devoured by heat,
The teeth of beasts and poisonous serpents' fangs
Shall bring destruction on the impious.

The sword without, and terror felt within,
Shall waste the babe, the virgin and young man,
The grey-haired man and matron in their years.
I said that I would scatter them abroad,
And make remembrance of them cease on earth:
Were I not mindful of the enemy,
Lest adversaries scandalous should exult,
'Our hand is high, He hath not done all this.'
A nation void of counsel they exist
Without an understanding in their midst.
O that they wisely might observe the end!
How should one chase a thousand—two drive back
Ten thousand blank in fright, except their Rock
Had parted with them, and the Lord consigned?
For theirs is not as our Reliance found,
Even our enemies themselves being judges.
Their vine of Sodom and Gomorrah springs—
Their grapes, in clusters bitter, burst with gall—
Their wine is dragon's poison. Is not this
Laid up in store, sealed in My treasury?
To Me shall vengeance come, and recompense;
Their foot shall slide in time: calamity
Is nigh, the things that threaten them make haste.
For He shall judge His people, and repent
When they that served Him shall have no more power.
And He shall say, 'Where are their gods, in whom
They trusted, which did eat the sacrifice,
And drank the wine of their drink offerings?
Let them rise up to help you and protect.

I am alone, there is no god with Me!
I kill, I make alive; I wound, I heal:
Neither can aught deliver from My hand;
Which high remains to attest, I live for ever.
And if I whet my glittering sword of power,
If I take hold on judgment, vengeance swift
Shall reach mine enemies arrayed in hate.
For I will make Mine arrows drunk with blood;
My sword shall eat the flesh of captives slain,
From My first payment to the enemy.'
Rejoice, O nations, ye His people all!
He will avenge the blood of servants true,
And on His adversaries vengeance cast;
And yet be merciful unto the world."

Thus Moses bade farewell to Israel's tribes,
Joshua, son of Nun, assisting him—
The fearless chief that was to lead the hosts
Into possession of the promised land.
Above, obedient to the call of God,
The soul prophetic went. Nor ever thence
His eyes' immortal light was met on earth;
Men knoweth not his lonely sepulchre,
But nations following rise as monuments.

BOOK IX.

Yet raged the restless conflict of men's souls;
As eager heroes rushed upon the field
To win distinction, ere they sank from sight,
To leave some token of their force behind.
There is a natural desire in man
To blend with scenes and institutions here,
In which hope may identify his name;
The while preparing for a greater sphere.
But few are blest with that superior power
Investing genius with the marvelous.
Of these were Joshua, and like lives unsung;
But whose bright records shall appear at length,
After time's passage to eternity.

The soul of Samuel, whom a mother's vow
Disposed to Heaven—Hannah rich in faith
And praise of Love divine endowed her son—
Possessed God's revelation, when despair
Surrounded Israel. By his teachings pure,
The tribes, long renegade thro' Satan's schemes,
Returned to God in conscience, and enrolled
In His just army, triumphed once again.
But hampering age came on the worthy man;
And when his sons assumed their father's charge,
Instead of judging Israel faithfully,

They turned aside to Selfishness, took bribes,
And their perverted judgment sold for gold.
Then joined the Hebrew elders to protest,
Before the seer, against his flagrant sons;
Begging him to appoint an actual king
To judge them like all nations. They preferred
The questionable rule, where dignity
Maintains at least right's semblance for support,
To the low traffic of unblushing rogues,
Who, like some scoundrels of the present day,
Crept into favorable place, where coiled
Their serpent-tongues dealt secret death about.
Still are there natures innocent enough
To never doubt judicial honesty;
Tho' Justice seems insulted, they ascribe
The fact to some profound or hidden truth,
Which the robed criminal takes care to hint
Compelled his strange decision. Oh, could brutes
Detect as well the savor of deceit,
As effluence unseen their nostrils track,
Instinct would hound and banish from the earth
These foulest enemies of God and man.

Sad was the prayer of Samuel, to Him
Who should alone be King, the only Lord!
Yet hearken, Spirit answered, to the voice
That rises from the people: for not thee
But Me they have rejected, wanting faith,
They plead that I should not reign over them.

According to all works which they have done
Since I delivered them unto this hour
Wherewith they have forsaken Me and served
Unworthy gods, so do they unto thee.
Now, therefore, bend to their united will!
Howbeit, yet solemnly protest to them,
And show what manner of a king shall reign.
Thus, having spoken to the malcontents,
He warned, with accents quavering to regret:
"Mind, this will be the manner of the king
Destined to govern! He will take your sons,
Appoint them for himself as charioteers
And horsemen; some shall run before his cars.
He will appoint him captains over thousands.
And leaders over fifties, fierce equipped;
While some shall make his instruments of war,
Others will cultivate and reap his crops.
And he will claim your daughters to be cooks—
Your fields, your vineyards and your olive grounds,
Even the best, his servants will be given.
He will possess the tenth of aught you raise,
And of your vineyards for his officers.
Your goodliest servants shall advance his work—
Aye, ye shall be his servants, one and all!
Your woes shall cry out in that day because
Of him ye shall have chosen for a king;
But Heaven will not hear you in that day."
Not less the people scorned his warning voice,
And proud acclaimed: "Nay, we will have a king!

That we may also be like other nations;
And that our king may judge us, and go out
To lead and fight our battles." Samuel heard,
And in his prayer to God rehearsed their will.
Submissive, tho' regretful, when resolved,
He sent them peacefully unto their homes.

From search, obedient to a father's will,
Came Saul, the son of Kish—of Benjamin—
To meet devotion moving silently
Towards the feast prepared for God on high.
But not alone nobility, the form
Which Heaven bestowed on Saul, attention won
Of Samuel, who being hailed, thus made reply;
"I am the seer of whose abode ye ask!
Go up before me to the holy shrine;
For ye shall rest and eat with me to-day,
And when to-morrow I shall let thee go,
Straight will I tell thee what is in thy heart.
As for thine asses, lost three days ago,
Set not thy mind on them, for they are found.—
On whom is the desire of Israel fallen,
If not on thee and all thy father's house?"
Saul, puzzled at the sage's import, said:
"Sire, am I not a Benjamite, whose tribe
Is smallest of the tribes of Israel—
My house the least in line from Benjamin?
Ah, wherefore speakest thou so marked to me?"
But mute the prophet led his visitors

To chiefest place among the bidden guests,
And bade the cook bring in that portion choice
Which had been set apart by strict command,
This, Saul was given to eat—symbolical
Of what should follow, by the host dispensed.
At spring of day the good man called his guest,
And journeyed with him to the city's end;
Where Saul was told to send his servant on,
But pause himself awhile, that Samuel
Might show to mind the holy word of God.

Then Samuel poured upon the bowing head
Of him he kissed, the sacred oil endowed,
Thus speaking: "Is it not because the Lord
Hath thee anointed captain of His hosts?
When thou art gone abroad from me to-day,
Thou'lt find two men at Rachel's sepulchre,
And they, as surely, will say unto thee:
'The asses which thou wentest to seek are found—
And lo, thy father sorroweth for thee lost.'—
Then shalt thou go still forward from that place,
Unto the plain of Tabor, there to meet
Three men approaching Bethel, bearing gifts.
They will salute and give thee loaves of bread;
Which thou shalt gratefully receive from them.
Thence wilt thou meet with prophets coming down
From the high place, with psaltery, pipe and harp,
Before them played; and they shall prophesy:
And Wisdom will upon thee come, and thou

Shalt prophesy with them—thou shalt be turned
Into another man. And let it be,
When these signs manifest themselves to thee,
Thou do—God with thee—as occasion serves.
Thou shalt arrive at Gilgal, and await
My coming there to offer sacrifice;
Where I will show thee what thou art to do."
It was, that when the anointed turned about
To go from Samuel, Heaven changed his heart:
And all these wonders came to pass that day.
But when Saul prophesied amongst the seers,
People that knew him hitherto exclaimed:
"What now is come upon the son of Kish—
Is Saul as well among the prophets found?"
Which last became a proverb in all mouths.

When Samuel called the people far to prayer
At Mizpeh, thus his voice admonished them:
"Thus saith your Lord the God of Israel,
I brought you out of Egypt, set you free
From burden of all kingdoms! And this day
Ye have rejected Love, Who solely saved
Your households from untold adversities.
Yet have ye cried unto your Sovereign wise:
Nay, over us set a king. Now, therefore, here
Present yourselves before the Lord, by tribes
And thousands orderly to assert your will."
Accordingly the masses drew around,
And soon the tribe of Benjamin was taken;

Which branch, by families, came forward then,
And voting, fixed upon the Matri house;
Saul, son of Kish, being chosen finally.
But when they sought him, he could not be found.
Directed, they beseiged his hiding-place,
And fetched him thence—a giant in their midst.
So Samuel's voice for admiration called:
"See ye whom God hath chosen to exalt,
That none is like him in the multitude?"
And all the people cheered: "God save the King!"
Their kingdom's laws by Samuel were announced,
Written and laid up sealed before the Lord;
After which Samuel dismissed the throngs,
Commanding each unto his own abode.
Saul also went to Gibeah his home,
Attended by a band of men, whose hearts
Descending Love had touched. But some were there
Whom Satan governed, and they said in pride:
"How shall this man deliver us?" They sneered,
And brought him nothing. But he held his peace.

Who doubts Divine Attention over earth,
Hath studied not the fitness for all times
Suddenly measured to the souls of men
Obscure until emergence lights their sphere.
Not long was Saul to guide a mindless herd;
For greed impelled the plundering Ammonites
To threaten Israel with sword and shame;
While Hebrew cowardice despairing wept,

Tho' far outnumbering their ruffian foes.
But Heaven enlightened Saul—the meanest louts
Among his tribes were those whom property
Distressed—whose fear of loss was next to death.
These, Selfishness had made desert; but Saul,
To engage the very weakness they sustained,
Destroyed a yoke of oxen, chopped so small,
That messengers he sent with bits in hand
To every house in Israel, to say,
Whoever came not forth unto the war
Would find his goods or oxen thus destroyed.
Then awe of power upon the craven fell,
And thousands followed Saul with mocked consent.
His army vast, three valorous fronts put forth,
Which closed upon the Ammonites at dawn,
And slew them till the heat of day. No two
Were left together of the scattered thieves.
Now at success the minion shout arose :
"Who said, 'Shall Saul reign over us, our king?
Bring them before us to be put to death!"
Firm Saul responded : "There shall not a man
Be put to death this day—wherein the Lord
Hath wrought in Israel His victory."
Then counseled Samuel, and the people calmed :
"Come, let us go to Gilgal, and renew
The kingdom there." Respectful all obeyed;
Hasting as marshaled to the place devout,
Where Saul their ruler was again confirmed.

Here, midst rejoicings, Samuel testified:
"Behold I have hearkened to your common voice
In all that ye have spoken unto me,
And have established a king over you.
Bear witness as he walketh in your sight:
For I am old and gray—my sons remain—
Even from my childhood you have known my ways.
I still am here—bear witness, ye who can,
Against me before God, and His anointed!—
Whose beast have I used, wrongfully possessed?
Or whom have I defrauded—whom oppressed?
Whence have I taken bribe to blind mine eyes?
Speak, and I will restore the same to you."
They said: "Thou hast not cheated nor oppressed,
Neither hast thou grasped aught from any hand."
Sustained, the unflattered patriarch resumed:
"Stand still then, revelers, before the Lord,
That I may reason with you on that Will
Extending you and yours continual grace.
When Jacob pined in Egypt, and your sires
Cried for deliverance unto God, He sent
Moses and Aaron, who conducted them,
And brought them here to dwell in rectitude.
When they forgot their Lord, as slaves they fell
Into the service of their enemies.
And cried they unto Heaven: 'We have sinned,
Because we have forsaken our great King,
And served the errors, Baalim, Ashtaroth;
But now in mercy, Lord, deliver us,

And we will serve Thee.' To their prayer benign,
God sent His champions who established right.
Yet when another foe confronting stood,
Ye clamored for a king ; altho' the Lord
Your God was King of all. Therefore, behold
The one whom ye have chosen to desire !
Behold, the Lord hath given him to rule.
If ye will fear the Sovereign, serve Him first ;
And not rebel against the holy Word ;
Then shall both ye and he that reigneth here
Continue following the Lord your God.
But if ye disobey that Voice divine,
The power of Life against you shall be turned,
As once against your fathers.—Now observe
What will convince you of how weak ye are."
So saying, Samuel called unto the Lord,
Who sent rain thundering on their harvest day ;
Whereat the people greatly feared, and moaned :
"Pray for thy servants, Samuel, unto Heaven,
That we be spared ! for to our other sins
We have added evil, coveting a king."
"Fear not," replied the venerable man ;
"Your past is wicked : yet turn not aside
From seeking Love, but serve with all your heart ;
For vain things cannot profit nor redeem.
God in His dignity will not forsake
His people, whom it pleases Him to bless.
While Truth forbids that I should cease to pray
For you, still must I teach you the right way :

Fear only the desertion of your Lord!
Consider how He made you and maintained.
If, then, ye shall do wickedly, your king
And all that follow him shall be consumed."

The first provision of the reign of Saul
Was, to select three thousand trusty men
From Israel's numbers, tho' the Philistines,—
Who were as sands unsummed, and challenged war,
Suffering no smith among the Hebrew bands—
Complacent viewed this play of armless strength.
Such was their strait, the people hid in caves
And thickets, rocky hights and secret pits;
Some even crossed the Jordan, in their fear,
And hundreds trembling followed Saul about.
At last, impatient for activity,
The new-made ruler offered sacrifice;
For Samuel came not at appointed time.
But when the offering was made, behold,
The aged priest arrived, and Saul went out
To meet him and salute him. Samuel asked:
"What hast thou done?" And Saul distraught replied:
"I saw the people scattered from my side—
Thou camest not within the appointed days—
I knew our foes were gathering near in force;
Therefore said I, 'The Philistines will close
Upon me, and I have not sought God's aid:'
I forced myself therefore, and sacrificed."
Stern Samuel said, "Thou hast done foolishly!

Hadst thou controlled thyself, the sovereign Lord
Would have established power in thee for aye.
But now thy rule continued shall not be!
The Lord hath found a man to suit him more,
And hath appointed that he take thy place;
Because thou hast not kept the law in faith."
With this prediction, Samuel returned
To Gibeah. Saul sadly numbering
His followers, found scarce six hundred men.

Meanwhile the spoilers, ravenous as wolves,
In bands from different points came down upon
The homes of helpless thousands. Jonathan,
Saul's eager son, with trust in Heaven alone,
Departed secretly, accompanied
By one attendant, to the hostile camp.
Encountered by weak ridicule, he slew
Twenty in that first onslaught of surprise,
Helped nobly by his servant's bravery.
Then fell the enemy in fierce dispute—
They turned on one another, while the earth
Trembled—they melted as a multitude
From sight of Israel's watch at Gibeah.
Surprised hereat, Saul bade his people count
To learn what persons from their midst had gone;
So it was ascertained that Jonathan
And his young armor-bearer were away.
Now when those craven Hebrews hidden long
From light of day, and other selfish slaves,

Who had deserted Israel, and cringed
For safety in the camps of sin, beheld
Confusion scattering the Philistines,
They entered battle and with vaunts pursued
The routed enemy, to join success.
But tho' victorious, Saul, for want of tact,
Weakened his warriors. Satan secretly
Prevailed, and made him envious of his son,
Whom he desired to sacrifice for fame,
And would have slain, had not the people's will
Pronounced against such infamy. They exclaimed:
"Shall Jonathan, who wrought this victory
In Israel, die? Eternal King forbid!
As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair
Of his head fall; for he hath wrought with God."
So rescued they the just and valiant youth.

Perplexing conflicts followed without good,
Till Samuel, roused by Saul's perversity,
Alarmed and pained, confronted him and said:
"When thou wast little in thine own regard,
Wast thou not made the head of Israel's tribes,
The Lord anointing thee to be their king?
Wisdom directed that thy power advance
Against the plunder gates of Amalek,
To fight against and sweep them from the earth.
Wherefore, then, didst thou not obey that Voice,
But didst upon the spoil light, covetous?"
Saul answered: "I obeyed the Voice divine—

My people took the spoil, the chief of which
Should have been utterly destroyed at once,
In sacrifice unto our Lord and God."
Then Samuel: "Hath the Lord as great delight
In sacrifice as in obedience?
Behold, to obey is better than all rites—
To hearken, than the burning fat of rams.
For much as witchcraft, is rebellion false,
And stubbornness even as idolatry.
Because thou hast put off the Word of God,
He also hath rejected thee as king."
Vainest excuses followed. Samuel turned
To go, but Saul grasped tight his mantle's skirt,
Which rent. Whereon Age formed this parable:
"The Lord hath rent the realm of Israel
From thee this day, and given it to one
Better than thou. The Strength of Israel
Will neither lie nor change; for He is not
A mortal creature, that He should repent."
Saul murmured: "I have sinned; yet honor me,
Before the elders of my tribes, and turn
Again with me, that I may worship God."
So Samuel yielded to the prayers of Saul,
Who at the altar bowed a penitent.
Not pure revenge moved Samuel to demand
That Agag, king of Amalek, be brought
Before him: Feeble from consuming woes,
They led the captive king, who weakly said:
"Surely, the bitterness of death is past."

And Samuel answered: "As thy sword hath made
Fond women childless, so thy mother shall
Be childless among women." Speaking thus,
He slew the robber king before the shrine.
Then Samuel went to Ramah—never more
To see the face of Saul until his death;
When aged memory would mourn for him.

Obedient to divine authority
The sage repaired to Bethlehem. There feared,
Until his mission peaceful was announced;
He offered sacrifice and sanctified,
Among the others, Jesse and his sons.
Struck with Eliab's stature, Heaven reproved
The mind that, spite of close experience,
Allowed the admiring eye to govern it;
Since worth should not be judged from outward marks
But looked for in the soul's unfailing gleams.
As Jesse's other sons were blessed, and passed,
The priest inquired: "Are all thy children here?"
The proud sire answered: "There remaineth yet
The youngest, but behold, he keepeth sheep."
And Samuel gracious: "Send and fetch him here;
For we will not retire till he arrives."
So bidden, David speedily was brought,
Ruddy in budding manhood from the fields,
With beauteous countenance, where intellect
Illumined every feature brave and kind.
At once, as moved by Love's direct control—

Which urged, Arise, anoint him! this is he.
Poured Samuel from the horn of sacred oil,
Anointing the young shepherd in their midst:
And Heaven's Spirit came upon the youth
From that day forward. Samuel, thus discharged,
Returned to Ramah for repose and prayer.
A changed condition was observed in Saul,
Which worried even his servants, till they said:
"Behold, an evil spirit troubleth thee.
Command thy servants to seek out a man,
Some cunning player on the harp; whose art
Shall banish evil, lord, and make thee well."
One, who had witnessed David's many powers,
Spoke in his praise. Wherefore the king dispatched
By messengers command that Jesse send
His gifted son to minister relief.
So David came, and won the heart of Saul,
Who, selfish for him, sent to Jesse, saying:
"I pray thee, let thy son continue here;
For he hath found much favor in my sight."
Thus, for a time, was David's happy skill,
Made to dispel depression from the king.
Impending war, however, soon engaged
Saul's lagging energies. The Philistines,
Gathered in thousands, menaced Israel;
Compelling union of the tribes besieged
To form in one great body for defense.
Ranged on two mountain sides, the long array
Of either army braved the other's charge;

But days were spent in bloodless plans, while taunts
Re-echoed thro' the vale that lay between.
A champion of the Philistines, by name
Goliath, on whose towering figure gleamed
A brazen helmet and thick coat of mail,
Topping the greaves that cased his mighty limbs,
Strode forth—a disc between his shoulders hung—
With spear whose staff was like a weaver's beam;
And one before him went to bear his shield.
Midway he stood for challenge, and cried out
Unto attentive Israel: "Am not I
A Philistine, and ye devote to Saul?
Choose you a man, and send him down to me.
If able he shall kill me, then our hosts
Will be your servants! but if I prevail,
And kill him, ye shall servants be to us."
The echoes only answer him; so pride,
Before retiring in defiance shouts:
"The bands of Israel I defy this day;
Give me a man, that we may test our powers!"
But Saul and all his cohorts stood in dread,
Nor answered the dull giant who retired.

David, who had returned to tend his flocks,
Being sent by Jesse with parched corn and loaves
To his three elder brethren in the camp,
And cheese-cakes for the captain of their band,
Came to the trench where shouts for battle rose.
Both armies stood upon the brink of war,

Restrained, but all excited by suspense;
When David, leaving to a servant's care
The car and gifts he brought, ran eagerly
To meet his brethren, and saluted them.
While they conversed, behold, there came in sight
The huge Goliath, for the fortieth time,
To challenge Israel and defy the Lord.
Him David heard—and blushed to note what fear
The Hebrews felt, who from the Titan fled.
They, to his look astonished, amplified:
"Hast seen this man that cometh to provoke,
And still defieth Israel? On the man
That killeth him, the king will riches shower,
Endow a daughter, and exalt his house."
And David asked: "What, say you, shall be done
To him that killeth this vain Philistine,
And lifteth the reproach from Israel?
Who is this Philistine that he should dare
Defy the armies of the living God?"
And jesters answered: "So it shall be done,
As promised, to the man that killeth him."
Eliab, David's eldest brother, heard
The parley, and with angry pride inveighed:
"Why camest thou down hither? To whose charge
Hast thou thy sheep left in the wilderness?
I know thy pride and naughtiness of heart;
Thou art come curious to behold the fray."
Tho' thus insulted, David meek replied:
'What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"

He turned away, but fearless spoke his thoughts
To others, who the common answer gave.

So dauntless stirred the spirit of his words,
Rehearsed from mouth to mouth, Saul sent for him,
To whom, warmed with the issue, David said:
"Let no man's courage fail because of him;
Thy servant will confront this Philistine!"
But Saul dissuaded: "Able thou art not
To go against the prodigy, and fight:
For thou art but a youth, and he a man
Trained from his youth to war." Yet David spoke:
"Thy servant kept his father's sheep; and once
There came a monstrous brute which took a lamb!
I swift pursued and smote him, and reclaimed
The flesh from out his mouth! when he arose,
I caught him by the beard, and smiting slew
Both bear and lion—this unhallowed giant
Shall be as one of them, seeing that he hath
Defied the armies of the living God!
The Lord that saved me from the monster's paw,
Will from this ruffian's hand deliver me."
Admiring, Saul prayed Heaven might attend
The enterprise, to which he gave his arms;
But David, ere he proved them, turned and said:
"I cannot go with these!" He put them off.
Taking his staff, he chose him five smooth stones
Out of the brook, and put them in a bag
That shepherds carry; with his sling in hand,

He approached Goliath, who again came forth
Preceded by the man that bore his shield.
Astonished, even doubtful of the sight,
Goliath pushed his helmet back, to view
The youthful form approaching ; then exclaimed :
"Am I a dog, to thus be met with staves?—
Curst by all gods that aid the Philistines
Be thou, sad stripling, in thy bloom to meet
Whom fate hath qualified to master men !
But come to me and I will give thy flesh—
A tender morsel—to the fowls of air,
And to such beasts as prowl the field by night !"
To this proud boast, thus David loud returned :
"Thou comest to me with sword and spear and shield !
But I confront thee in the name of One,
The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel ;
Whom thou hast dared defy. This day the Lord
Will give thee unto me ; and I will smite
And take thy head from thee—your carcasses
Shall draw the fowls of air and beasts of earth
To one great feast ; that all the world may know
There is a God supreme in Israel !
This whole assembly shall be taught that God
Saveth not haughtiness with sword and spear !
Sure battle is the Lord's, and He will give
Into our hands your numbers." Speaking thus,
They approached each other, he of mighty frame,
With large eyes rolled in rage ; but David lithe,
And pleased in aspect of assured success.

Taking a stone, the shepherd charged his sling,
And in an instant like a shot it sped
Swift whizzing, tho' unsighted, to its aim;
Upon the forehead of the Philistine
It struck, arrested in the shattered bone.
Forward the towering figure reeled; and fell
Upon his face to earth—the armor's clang
Announced his dark departure to the shades.
So David, swordless tho' he had prevailed,
Advanced, and with the fallen giant's blade,
Cut the grim head from off its massive trunk.
The Philistines, with superstitious dread,
Upon their champion's fall, fled signally;
Pursued by those who, waiting no command
From Saul, now rushed and shouted to the rout.
As when a plunging drove in fright stampede,
And thunder blindly o'er the grumbling plain,
Fierce hunters follow, and along their wake
Leave bleeding carcasses, still pressing on
To further slaughter; so the stumbling mass
Of armored Philistines rushed terror-struck
Before the men of Saul, toward the gates
Of distant Ekron—so the wounded fell,
Their dying groans midst the great tumult lost;
Their trampled forms disfigured in the crush.
And far as Gath, abroad on different roads,
The dead in scattered hundreds could be found;
When Israel's victorious bands returned,
To spoil the tents deserted. David brought

The head a trophy to Jerusalem;
But Saul, desiring his society,
Restrained affection's son from going home.

Heroes are never envious of the brave;
And Jonathan with David's heart was knit
By Love, blest Medium of true fellowship.
A sacred covenant of friendship bound
Their valiant hearts together. Jonathan
Stripped off his robes, and gave unto his friend
Even to the arms and girdle he possessed.
David went out wherever Saul dispatched;
And, acting wisely, he was given command
Over the men at war—approved by all.
Yet when the Hebrew women to rejoice
Came from their many cities, and with songs
And instruments of music thus exchanged:
"Saul hath slain thousands, David tens of thousands!"
Their words displeased the king, and Selfishness
Prompted his musing: "Am I less to them—
What more except the kingdom can he have?"
And Saul eyed David darkly from that day.
Taught by the evil spirit to deceive
His servants, who condoned what else were crime,
The king, while David touched his favorite chords,
A javelin cast to kill the rhapsodist.
But David, warned by Heaven, avoided death;
And Saul ungracious, feared the ward of Love,
Whom all of Israel and of Judah praised.

When told his daughter, Michal, loved the brave,
Saul's purpose sinister affected zeal
To honor David as his son-in-law;
Providing that, for dowry, he should bring
One hundred skins of fresh-slain Philistines.
This was a snare to jeopardize his life;
Saul willing that the hand of foe destroy,
Rather than his, the man so popular.
David submissive to his destiny,
Tho' well aware of Saul's insidious point,
Went with his men against the enemy,
And slew two hundred; bringing evidence
To Saul of each one slain. Sullen he gave
His artless daughter unto David's arms—
She loving whom her father dreaded more.

The soul abandoned to malignant power,
If thwarted in its evil purposes,
Throws off whatever mask it may have worn,
And sudden glares in aspect horrible.
Hence, are we startled when rash insolence
Breaks from the mouths of men whose craft has failed,
Disclosing murderous malice long concealed.
A wretched band are they of Satan mocked;
Who, tho' permitted for a time to rule,
Bring to their station ridicule at last,
And desperate vent their spleen upon themselves.
Of these proved Saul, as heedless of effect

He asked his son and servants to combine,
And murder David. Jonathan at once
Informed his friend, and counseled him to hide,
Until by fervent pleading with the king,
Safety permitted a return. But war
Again called out the valiant; David fought,
And with great slaughter turned the Philistines,
Who fled abashed as from a demi-god.
Fond then he hoped for peace, but found it not;
The same attempt was made against his life,
And when he fled, assassins were sent out
To watch his house at night, in wait to slay.
Devoted Michal, with true woman's tact,
Prevailed upon her husband to escape
From window deemed impassable to all,
Save her invention. On his vacant couch
She laid an image covered with a cloth,
The better to deceive Saul's messengers,
And furnish David time to evade pursuit.
When entered the rough band in search of him,
She pointing made pretense that he lay sick;
Whereon, reluctant they returned to Saul,
Who bade them go and bring him in his bed.
Enraged when the deception was exposed,
Saul furious summoned Michal to explain
Why she had so deceived him, setting free
His enemy, in David understood.
She answered for her safety. Meanwhile told
That David was at Naioth, Saul dispatched

A band of messengers to capture him:
But when they saw the company devout
Of prophets, Samuel standing as the head,
God's Spirit was upon them, and they prayed,
Forgetting Saul's command, in prophecy.
Again, and still again, the violent king
Sent agents to take David; but the power
Of Love converted them as well to Truth.
At length the desperate ruler went himself;
But, like all others, was controlled by Heaven,
And humbly joined the bands devotional.

David, however, from his presence fled,
And meeting Jonathan, consulted thus:
"What have I done—what evil act is mine
Before thy father, that he seeks my life?"
Touched, Jonathan yet hopefully replied:
"The Lord forbid such ill—thou shalt not die!
My father will do nothing, great or small,
Unknown to me: why should my father hide
This thing from me? It is not probable."
"Thy sire," said David, "knoweth certainly
That I have found grace constant in thine eyes;
And saith he, 'Let not Jonathan know this,
Lest he be grieved;' but truly as the Lord
Liveth—as thy soul liveth—there is scarce
A step between me and most violent death."
Then Jonathan, unselfish: "Whatsoever
Thy soul desireth, I will do for thee."

Thought checked but brought to David this response :
" To-morrow being new moon, I should not fail
To sit with Saul at meat ; but let me hide
Instead, till evening of the third day comes.
And if thy father miss me, say to him,
David begged leave of me that he might haste
To Bethlehem, his city : as there is
A yearly rite there for the family.
Should he say 'Well,' thy servant shall have peace !
But if his wrath disturb, be sure that he
To evil is determined. Therefore deal
Kindly with me, thy servant, whom thou hast brought
Into a covenant of Love with thee.
If, notwithstanding, there be wrong in me,
Slay me thyself ! Why counselest thou return
Unto thy father ?" Satan crossed with doubt
The trustful mind a moment, banished thence
By Jonathan, who said : " Far be it from thee !
For if I knew that evil were to come
Upon thee from my father, would not I
Be first to warn thee ?" David puzzling asked :
" But who shall tell me ? What if Saul reply
Roughly ?"—For time the two friends sought a field,
Where Jonathan thus promised before Heaven :
" When I have found my father's deepest thoughts,
If, knowing them toward thee good, I pause
And neither send nor show it unto thee,
May Justice do even more to Jonathan !
But if it please my sire to work thine ill,

Then will I so inform, and bid thee forth,
That thou mayest go in peace—the Lord with thee.
Yet, friend, thou shalt not only while I live
Show me Love's kindness that I perish not;
But cut not off thy favor from my house!
No, not when God hath swept thine enemies
Without distinction from the face of earth."
Warm clasping hands their covenant renewed,
While Love descending blest the generous bond.
So influenced to a plan spoke Jonathan:
"As said, to-morrow thou shalt like be missed,
Thy seat being empty. After three days, haste
To where thou didst conceal thyself before
When threatened; by the Ezel stone remain.
And I will shoot three arrows on the side
Thereof, as tho' I shot them at a mark.
Behold, then I will send a lad, and say,
'Go find the arrows.' If I say to him,
'The darts are on this side of thee;' come thou
Fearlessly forth, to peace assured, no harm;
As the Lord liveth! But if I say thus,
'The arrows are beyond thee;' go thy way:
For Heaven hath so directed.—As to that
Which thou and I have spoken of, behold,
The eternal One between us be forever."
So David hid himself, while Jonathan
Rejoined his jealous father.

For a day
The king thought lightly of his absent aid;

But when the second without David came,
Saul questioned Jonathan, whose set reply,
Tho' deferential given, kindled wrath
That first insulted, and essayed to rouse
Envy in Jonathan against his friend;
Concluding with a threat on David's life.
"Wherefore shall he be slain—what hath he done?"
Escaped the lips of friendship; which so stung
And maddened Saul he hurled a deadly shaft
At his own son. Thus Jonathan was shown
The evil part determined by his sire.
He arose, with anger fierce, who feared no man;
Nor would he deign his presence to the board,
But sorrowed for his friend so scandalized.
Forth to the field he strode in morning's light:
A sprightly lad beside him, proud to attend.
"Run," said the marksman, "find the darts I shoot."
Ahead skips eager innocence; the bow
Impels an arrow harmlessly beyond.
Its place approached, the lad direction hears:
"Is not the dart beyond thee?—Haste, stay not."
Far different these sounds to David passed;
Their import known but to himself and friend,
Woke the sad echoes of that lonesome place,
And left the morning brightness chill to them.
Little thought artless boyhood bidden thence
To bear the bowman's implements away,
What strong emotion that deep voice suppressed,
Nor why the great frame trembled. Glad he sped

Toward the city, at his master's word.
Then David wretched from concealment rose,
But cast him on the ground again in woe;
And Jonathan, extending eager hands,
Rushed to his friend's embrace—their last save one—
Tears starting as their eyes compassioned met,
Until from blessings hastily exchanged,
They freed their hearts and parted. Brave but fond
Would either turn while distance gave them view,
To catch each other in the same sad act,
Or wave adieu ; and so they passed from sight—
One banished crimeless, but a wanderer—
The other lonely in a people's midst.

At Nob arriving, David met the priest,
Ahimelech, who, having given him food,
And sword well merited to help him on,
Was marked by Doeg as Saul's enemy,
And slain by the base Edomite when none else,
Obeyed the envious king's command to strike
The priests of God. Fourscore and five were killed,
Whose spotless linen saved not from the fiend
That tyranny directed. But such rule
Hastens its own destruction ; discontent
Affects those subject, and allegiance dies.
Hundreds distressed now joined the fugitive,
And hailed him captain. For his parents' peace,
He begged the king of Moab to allow
Their stay at Mizpah ; thence the duteous son

Led forth his little band to Hareth wild.
Informed by spies, Saul (camped beneath a tree,
His spear in hand, and servants standing near)
Thus prompted by the infernal tempter, spoke :
" Hear me, ye Benjamites ! will Jesse's son
Give each of you broad fields and vineyards rich,
And make you captains over multitudes,
That ye have all conspired against me so ?
My son being leagued with David secretly,
None have apprised me in this time of need."
Such was the drivel that preceded crime
When Doeg pandered to his desperate lord,
And such the bribe whenever Saul desired
The service of men false and treacherous.

After defending Keilah, David prayed
For grace of Truth upon his policy;
And Wisdom showed the treachery of those
His valor had defended but that day.
Sure that they would deliver him to Saul,
He, with his brave six hundred, left the place,
And went where fate compelled them to abide.
Free in their mountain strongholds for awhile
The sturdy followed him. But Saul was told
Of all their movements, and resolved to employ
The Ziphite traitors to deliver them.
Again went Jonathan to warn his friend,
And grateful David sealed their covenant,
Prudent but trustful in a greater Will.

The tyrant compassed with his servile bands
In closing circuit David's small command;
Yet Heaven ordained things different. Hard urged
There came a messenger to Saul with word:
"Haste home—the Philistines invade our land!"
At once the king recalls his followers,
As from a chase, and homeward heads the van,
Leaving to joy and freedom those besieged.

Routing the Philistines, Saul restless chose
Three thousand men of Israel, and resolved
To capture David ere he thought of peace.
Where wild goats browsed upon the rocky steeps
Of bleak En-gedi, he was told the brave
Had late retreated; thither then he marched
With all the terrors of his force exposed.
Proud from success but weary he retired
Alone to rest him in a cave near by,
And sudden sleep descended on the man,
Sinking his senses in unconsciousness.
Now David, with his men concealed within,
Tho' urged (since Heaven had delivered Saul
And laid him helpless there) to kill their foe,
Scorned such foul act, and stayed their murderous hands
From harming one anointed of the Lord;
Yet from his king's deep robe he cut the skirt,
As evidence of love and loyalty.
Saul, rising from his slumber unaware,
Went out to join his men; when David rose

And following cried to him: "My lord the king!"
Saul, startled, turned; and David bowed to earth,
Appealing: "Wherefore hearest thou men's words,
Who say that David seeketh thy defeat?
Behold, this day unguarded thou wast thrown
Into my power—some bade me take thy life!
But reverence spared thee; true in faith I said,
I will not lift a hand against my lord;
For he is Heaven's anointed. Proving which,
My father, see, yea, see thine own robe's skirt
By me possessed: for in that I cut off
This proof, and killed thee not, know thou and see,
Mine hand is not against thee; yet thou huntest
My soul from life. The Lord between us judge,
His vengeance but not mine upon thee fall.
For whom hath Israel's king come out? what foe
Dost thou pursue? The dead or smallest thing.
Truth therefore judge between us—plead my cause,
And from thy wrathful hand deliver me."
"Is this thy voice, my David?" mused the king,
Who wept affected and confessed him thus:
"Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast
Returned me good, whereas I gave thee evil.
What man that finds his foe, will let him free?
The Lord reward thee for thy mercy shown
To me this day! And now, behold, I know
That thou shalt even be king—that Israel
Shall be established as thy kingdom great.
Swear therefore unto me before the Lord,

That thou wilt not cut off my progeny,
Nor curse my name out of my father's house."
Sworn, David took his men unto their hold,
While Saul turned homeward with his followers.

Next Samuel's death bereaved the Israelites,
Who mournful met at Ramah; every tongue
Pronounced his praises and deplored his loss.
The true philosopher tho' not sustained
While life extended prospect to just hope,
As usual, was applauded after death,
When his bright soul had fled the senseless sod.
Is it an envious trait of Satan's thralls,
That so restrains the recognition due
To greatness while its presence humbles men;
Or dull procrastination of regard,
Held till death starts it to activity?
Answer, ye groaners, whose fond eulogies
Too late apologize for long neglect,
And waste regrets upon indifferent clay.—
David had gone to Paran, where his band
Protected the possessions of a man
Churlish as rich, called Nabal. For reward,
The Chief sent ten young men with peaceful speech
To ask some needed recompense from wealth.
The niggard scoffed at them; so they returned
To David empty-handed, and rehearsed
The insulting answer given them. David stung,
Bade two-thirds of his men to arm themselves,

And go with him against the selfish rogue.
Meanwhile to Abigail, enslaved as wife,
(A woman wise and beautiful withal)
The shepherds brought accounts of Nabal's course,
And David's threatened vengeance on their house.
In haste she ordered from abundant stores
Two hundred loaves, two ample flasks of wine ;
Five sheep already dressed, and measured corn,
With raisin clusters manifold, and figs,
All which she made them load on ready beasts.
These sent before her as peace offerings,
She rode ; and by the covert of a hill,
Met David hurrying forward with his men.
Down at his feet she cast herself to plead :
"Upon me, lord, be this iniquity !
I pray thee grant me but thine audience,
And hear my words. Let not my lord regard
This man of Belial, Nabal ; as his name
Implieth, so is he with folly cursed :
But I thine handmaid saw not the young men
Whom thou didst send. Now, therefore, as the Lord
Endureth—as thy soul hath life—since One
All-merciful withholds from shedding blood,
Restrain thy avenging hand—let those that seek
Dark evil to thee, lord, as Nabal be.
Accept my blessing, to the young men given !
And Heaven will surely make thy house secure,
Who fighteth well the battles of the Just.
A man is risen to pursue thy soul :

But this is in the keeping of our God ;
And He shall send thy foes as from a sling.
Then when His goodness shall have raised thee up,
And thou art ruler over Israel,
It shall not grieve thee nor offend thy heart,
Either that thou hast shed blood causelessly,
Or that my lord avenged himself in vain ;
But when the Highest shall have dealt thee good,
Remember too thine handmaid." Thus she prayed.
And David yielding, blessed the grace of Love
Which sent so merciful a messenger :
Accepting both her presents and advice,
He admiring sent the fair one home in peace.
There she beheld a feast by Nabal spread,
Whose beastly manner, drunk and boisterous,
Deterred the wife from telling what had passed.
When morning brought him soberness of sense,
She told the glutton, and he changed as stone,
Such terror struck him. Nor survived he long ;
For, smitten by the Absolute, he died
About the tenth day following his debauch.
Praise tuned the lips of David, and for her,
Whose pleading made him trust superior Law,
He sent that she might come to be his wife.
Before his messengers she bowed, and said :
" I would in honor wash his servants feet."
So she arose, and hastened to obey ;
Five modest damsels riding after her.
To him her spirit had already joined

In Glory's aspirations for the best,
Above mere worldly hopes, went Abigail,
As wife of David—an assistant soul.
But Saul had taken Michal from his house,
And given her to a lustful favorite.
Down to the wilderness of Ziph marched Saul,
Three thousand men behind him; some of whom
Spoke against David, and prevailed again
Upon the weak king to repress his power.
Scouts brought to David word where Saul encamped;
And in the depth of night, Abishai
Accompanied his brave chieftain to the trench,
Where Saul lay sleeping—Abner, son of Ner,
And captain of the host, beside him flung—
The numbers weary slumbering round about.
Then said Abishai in an undertone:
"God hath exposed thine enemy for thee;
Now therefore let me spear him to the earth
At once, I will not smite the second time."
"Hold, slay him not:" checked David; "who can strike
The Lord's annointed, and be free from guilt?
Justice shall smite him; or his days have end;
Or he shall perish in the battle sought.
The Lord forbid that I should slay him thus!
But take the spear that at his bolster stands,
Also his water cruse, and let us go."
So they departed with the proofs, unseen,
Such trance-like fetters bound the slumberers.

David betook him to a neighboring hill
And on its safe crest standing, loud exclaimed:
"Answerest thou not, Abner?" Peace alarmed,
Flies banished in a trice—the echoes start,
And waken murmuring airs on every side.
The summons rouses Abner; and he shouts:
"Who art thou far that criest to the king?"
And David: "Art thou not a valiant man?
Who assumes thy place in Israel? Wherefore then,
Hast thou not kept secure thy lord the king?
Learn, one hath reached, but gracious spared his life.
This weakness is not good that thou hast shown!
Worthy of death thou art, to have left thy charge.
See now where the king's spear is, and the cruse
Of water that was at his bolster late."
Awakened Saul knew David's voice, and asked:
"Is that thy voice, my son?" "It is, O king!"
Spoke David, "Wherefore doth my lord pursue
After his servant—what wrong have I done?
If God hath moved thine ends against my life,
Let him accept an offering! if instead,
They be the generation sprung of men,
Cursed before Truth be they! for such have driven
Me out from an abiding in the Lord,
And urged me on to serve unworthy gods.
Provoke not Heaven with my guiltless blood!
For Israel is come out to seek a flea,
As when one hunts a partridge in the mountains."
All heard, and then the acknowledgement of Saul:

"Return my son—my David— I have sinned!
Nor will I harm thee more, because my soul
Was precious in thine eyes of fealty!
Behold, I have played the fool, and greatly erred."
But David answered: "The king's spear, behold!
Let one of the young men to fetch it come.
God render every man his faithfulness:
For He delivered thee into my hand,
Which touched not that anointed of the Lord.
Even as thy life was sacred in mine eyes,
So let my life be precious in His sight,
And may He save me from all troubles here."
The king replied: "Blessed be thou, my son!
Thou shalt both do great things and still prevail."
Thus blessing, Saul departed to his place.

Yet David's heart mistrusted; and he fled
With his associates to the King of Gath,
Who gave them welcome, tho' of other faith;
Saul hearing which, sought not for him again,
But reigned in fanciful security.
Forsaken tho' he felt himself of Heaven,
The king who had banished witches from his realm,
Now went to one in fear but ill-disguised.
The Philistines once more for pillage massed
In such great number, Saul with doubt and dread,
When neither dreams nor seers enlightened him,
Went cloaked to En-dor, where a famous hag
Was said to hold communion with the dead.

That science, still mistaken for a sect,
Which makes reflections manifest of mind,
To trump familiar spirits into view,
Abused credulity from earliest time.
Humble before the woman Saul appeared,
She first refusing aid, until he swore
No punishment would come to her. The witch
Then asked: "Whom shall I bring up unto thee?"
Saul weakly answered: "Call up Samuel."
Thro' end mysterious, when no less than him
Once master over Israel was called,
The wench detected who her patron was,
And cried in loud voice tremulous with fear:
"Why hast thou so deceived me? Thou art Saul!"
"Be not afraid," the dupe assured his like,
"What sawest thou?" She knavishly returned:
"A demi-god ascending out of the earth."
"What form is he?" inquired the King. She croaked,
"An old man, covered with a mantle dark."
Saul, recognizing Samuel, bowed his face;
And under spell he heard the wraith bemoan:
"Why hast thou brought me from my quiet grave?"
Saul answered: "I am sore distressed; my foes
Make war against, while God from me is turned,
And answereth no more by sage or dream:
Therefore I called thee, that thou mayest make known
What I shall do." The medium more severe,
Replied: "Then wherefore dost thou ask of me,
Seeing God not with thee, is become thy foe?

The Lord hath ordered as I prophesied:
For He hath rent the kingdom from thine hand,
And given it to thy neighbor, Jesse's son:
Because thou obeyedst not the voice of Truth,
Therefore art thou departed from, this day.
Moreover, Heaven will deliver thee,
With vanquished Israel, to the Philistines—
To-morrow thou and thine shall be with me."
Down Saul fell straightway fainting to the earth,
In fright — his strength was gone from lenghthened fast.
Food offered by the woman was refused;
Nor, till his servants forced him, would he eat
What nature needed to sustain his frame.
No criminal whose doom hath been pronounced,
Was ever led away in darker gloom
Than the dejected king, thro' cheerless night
Guided by vassals home, despairing, dumb.
Inevitable fate! When man is sure
A moment must arrive whose breath beyond
No power of earth can even extend a point,
How should he dodge and suffer ere it comes?
We make too much of transient interests,
And dream we own maturing loans of life:
These only bind our spirits to a sphere
Above which soul instinctive would aspire.

For every hundred in the ranks of Saul,
A thousand Philistines to battle thronged;

And deep surrounding spread the murderous line,
As gaping to engulf all Israel.
Fiercer than lion moved the desperate king.
His men, less mad, from the dread shock retired,
Which like a tempest came from different sides—
Sin's wolf-like chargers howling as they rushed
Upon the shrinking Israelites—war's crash
Of shattering arms—the twanging hum of bows,
And whirring arrows—panting rage and groans—
The incessant strokes and rattle of retreat,
All broke in discord on that mortal storm.
Forced back from where he mowed the enemy:
While rained the darts around him, step by step,
Saul moved among the slain—alas, to see
His Jonathan struck down with many a wound;
Abinadab and Melchi-shua, sons
Less noble but beloved, expiring near,
And faithful subjects, whose familiar looks
Were marked with death's last agony. What more
Had Saul to live for? Wounded by the shafts
That archers showered upon their leading foe,
He bade his armor-bearer thrust him through;
So the base enemy might be forestalled,
And not abuse his body after death.
The attendant, fearing, would not strike; and Saul
In desperation fell upon his sword:
Which action followed by the mournful slave,
They sank together in eternal night.

Now fleet these dreadful tidings spread abroad ;
The trembling Israelites forsook their homes,
And fled in terror, while their foes advanced
To occupy the cities and rejoice.
Triumphant, after trophies, Satan's mob
The next day sought that field, whose carnage strewn
And scattered far was sickening to the sight.
There finding Saul's remains and those he reared,
They stripped his body, and cut off his head;
Sending report thereof throughout their towns,
To exalt their idols, and the people cheer.
They put his armor in the sinful house
Of Ashtaroth: but fastened to the wall
Of Bethshan the king's body and his sons.
From Jabesh, when this infamy was known,
Some valiant men arose, and went by night
And took the bodies down, with decent pride.
On shrine they burned them; after which sad rite,
The bones were buried, and a fast observed.

BOOK X.

A wretch, in tattered clothes, and smeared with earth,
Brought the sad news to David; and bowed low,
Intent on favor, but thro' sin at fault.
"Whence comest thou?" asked the Chief; being answered thus:
"Late from the camp of Israel I escaped."
"How went the matter?" questioned David next.
"Thy people fled from battle," said the man:
"Whole multitudes have fallen, not to rise;
And Saul and his son Jonathan are dead."
"How knowest thou this as certain?" David asked.
The rogue, who deemed it pleasurable news
For David's soul ambitious, thought to win
Distinction for his service, and thus lied:
"Upon mount Gilboa I came by chance
Across King Saul; he leaned upon his spear;
And, lo, their horsemen pressed hard after him.
He looked behind him, saw me, and inquired
My bearing—An Amalekite, said I.
Then he implored me to come near at once
And slay him; since, tho' anguish tore his heart,
The spirit lingered in its shattered frame.
And so I slew him, as he could not live:
I took the crown from off his sightless head;
And bracelet that adorned the nerveless arm,

And have them hither brought unto my lord."
Then David and his followers rent their clothes,
And mourned, and wept, and fasted until even,
For Saul, for Jonathan, for the people slain.
Stern resolution darkened David's face,
Taxing the stranger on his origin :
" How wast thou not afraid to stretch thine hand
Against the Lord's anointed?" Censure spoke,
Commanding then a young man to approach
And fall upon the criminal. Struck down,
He groaning died, while David clear absolved :
" Thy blood be upon thine own head, for thy mouth
Hath testified against thee, and condemned."

Thus lamentation from the psalmist flowed :
" The beauty of proud Israel is slain
Upon thy hills—how are the mighty fallen !
Oh, tell it not in Gath, in Askelon ;
Lest daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest those unholy triumph in our woe.
Ye mountains of Gilboa ! let no dew
Nor rain descend upon you, nor rich fields :
For there the mighty shield of Saul is cast
Vilely to earth, as tho' not consecrate.
But from the blood and fat of mighty men,
The bow of Jonathan turned not away,
The sword of Saul not empty hath returned.
These two were bright and pleasant in their lives,
And they were not divided in their death :

Swifter than eagles, stronger they than lions.
Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet, with untold delights;
Who graced your dress with ornaments of gold.
How are the mighty fallen midst the fray!
O Jonathan, slain in thy stronghold high—
I am distressed for thee, my brother true:
So pleasant hast thou ever been to me—
Thy love to me was wonderful, and passed
The love of woman. Nothing hath survived!"
He wept, but bade them teach their young to use
The bow; which on the sacred page was marked.

At Hebron, where divine direction led,
He was anointed king by Judah's men;
There told of how the brave of Jabesh found
And buried Saul. David sent messengers
Unto the valiant ones, to recognize
And bless them for their courage and respect.
But Abner, captain of the scattered hosts,
Took Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, to Mahanaim;
And made him king above all Israel.
His partisans, by Abner led, went armed
As far as Gibeon; meeting by the pool
Joab, who now directed David's men.
They sat, the tide between them, and exchanged
Long pleas of merit and loud boasts of might;
Till Abner proudly risen, smiled and said:
"Let the young men, before us meet at play."

And Joab careless answered: "Let them meet."
Then there arose and crossed twelve Benjamites,
Foolhardy in their youth, for Ish-bosheth;
These, twelve of David's servants rushed against,
And each one caught his fellow by the head,
And thrust his sword into a panting breast;
So fell they down together and expired.
Now furious numbers to the encounter sprang,
Scores falling in the battle that ensued:
But Abner and his clan were beaten back
By Joab's sturdy followers. Three sons
Of Zeruiah fought on David's side:
Joab, Abishai and Asahel—
The last as light of foot as a wild roe.
Swift after Abner he pursued, nor swerved
To right or left, determined on his course,
When Abner turned, and, knowing him, addressed:
"Go thou aside, lay hold on some young man,
And take his armor to protect thy life."
But Asahel still followed him more close.
Then Abner once again admonished thus:
"Turn thee aside from following after me!
For wherefore should I smite thee to the ground?
How should I meet thy brother Joab then?"
Howbeit, he still refused to turn aside;
So Abner with the hind end of his spear
Smote him below the fifth rib, and its butt
Came out behind him; painful thus he died:
But many reached the place, and all stood still,

Save Joab and Abishai—they pursued
The distant Abner till the sun went down.
Returning with a troop of Benjamites,
Abner from hill-top thus to Joab called:
"Must the dread sword devour forevermore?
And knowest thou not it will bring bitterness
In the end? How long shall it be then, ere thou
Bid thine return from tracking their own blood?"
And Joab: "As God liveth! hadst thou not
Spoken, my people surely in the morning had
Gone up from following their brethren hence."
He blew a trumpet, and his warriors heard;
Neither pursued nor further fought the men.
Thus separated, Israel's wrath dissolved;—
A score was lost of David's servants brave;
But Abner suffered many times that loss.

During dissension David rose in power;
The house of Saul at variance weakening.
In Hebron, unto David, sons were born:
The first, named Amnon, of Ahinoam;
His second Chileab, of Abigail;
Third, Absalom, the son of Maacah;
Fourth, Adonijah, Haggith gave him birth;
Fifth, Shephatiah, born of Abital;
And sixth, young Ithream from Eglah came.
Great in his love the father cherished all,
But marked no latitude of nuptial life.
Such was the license common in those days,

Men proud of vigor praised the animal;
And sought in issue more continued fame,
Even extolling Heaven for that grace
Abused by genital extravagance.
So wrought the demon Selfishness in those
Not otherwise accessible, excess,
And open lust with concubines prevailed,
While human nature tolerant was debased.
Thro' one of these, first prostitute to Saul,
Named Rizpah, pride and envy came between
Abner and Ish-bosheth. The prince accused
His champion with disrespect, to whom
Indignant Abner thus let loose his wrath:
"Am I dog's head, which despite of Judah
Do show such favor to the house of Saul,
Thy father—to his brethren—to his friends—
I, who have not resigned thy craven head
To David's hand and vengeance—that thou chargest
Me with a fault to-day about this wench?
So do God unto me, and more, except,
As He hath sworn to David, as I do;
To change the kingdom from the house of Saul,
And to set David over Israel,
And over all, from Dan to Beer-sheba."
The shrinking prince could answer not a word,
So much he feared him, who with lofty scorn
Fixed on his face resentful, strode away.

Determined Abner sent commissioners

To David, with instructions worded thus:
"Whose is the land? Come, make thy league with me,
And I will bring all Israel unto thee."
To whom by agents David sent reply,
Delivered: "I will make a league with thee:
But one thing must be understood, that is,
Thou shalt not see my face, except thou first
Bring Michal, Saul's proud daughter, when thou comest."
To Ish-bosheth they went with his demand:
"Return to me the wife which I espoused
For a hundred foreskins of the Philistines."
So she was taken away from Phaltiel,
Who wept and whimpered following mean behind,
Till Abner spurned him back, with: "Go, return."
After communications were exchanged
Between the tribes and Abner, who advised
Their loyalty to David, he set out
For Hebron, taking with him twenty men;
They at the feast prepared by David sat,
When Abner courteous thus addressed their host:
"I will go forth, and gather all our seed
Unto my lord the king, that they may make
A compact with thee, and that thou mayest reign
As thy great heart desireth." David's grace
Bade Abner forward; and he went in peace.

But Joab hot from battle came with spoils
To Hebron—heard of Abner's visit there,

And peaceful exit—burst in on the king,
And scorning ceremony blurted out:
"What hast thou done? Our foe came unto thee,
Yet thou hast sent him free, and he is gone.
Thou knowest Abner, son of Ner, that he
Came to deceive thee, and to spy upon
Thy ways, and to know all thou doest here."
But David only smiled composingly;
So vexed, the man of blood rushed forth again,
To order swift pursuit. While at the well
Of Sirah resting, Abner was surprised;
Those foremost in the chase rejoiced with shouts,
Yet free from doubt he guardless went aside,
To speak with Joab quietly. At once
The treacherous warrior smote him where but late
He pierced his brother, Asahel, whose blood
Was now avenged; for Abner with one look
Of honorable scorn in silence sank.
Pained when King David heard of this, he said:
"Guiltless, before the Lord of Abner's blood
Am I forever! Let it rest upon
The head of Joab and his father's house;
Let there not fail therefrom the penalties
Of issue and afflictions consequent."
Then he proclaimed to Joab and the mass:
"Rend ye your clothing, and in sackcloth mourn—
Revere the presence of our noble dead."
Thus David honoring followed Abner's bier
Deploring to the grave, whereon he wept,

And all the people moved in sympathy.
There kingly nature sighed above the clay :
"Died Abner as a fool?—Thy hands were free ;
No fetters bound thy feet : but as a man
Falleth before the wicked, so fellest thou."
And o'er their dead the people wept again.
In vain they proffered food unto the king,
He vowing naught should pass his lips until
That sun went down. Which noticed, they admired,
And whatsoe'er he did, the people praised.
Even thus his soul's sincerity went forth :
"Ah, know ye not, a prince and a great man
Is fallen in Israel? And I this day
Am weak, tho' anointed king ; these men, the sons
Of Zeruiah, be too hard for me !
But God shall pay the wicked with their deeds."

Weak Ish-bosheth had but received the news
Which troubled most the Israelites, when two,
As selfish as satanic will could join,
One Baanah and the other Rechab named,
Stole in at noon upon the imbecile,
While on a bed he feverish tossed about.
With coward strokes, they slew the prince, and took
His head with them in secret thro' the night ;
Bringing it flushed to David, with these words :
"Behold the head of Ish-bosheth, the son
Of Saul, thine enemy, which sought thy life ;
Now Heaven hath avenged our lord the king

This time, of Saul and of his worthless seed."
Astonished, David's language thus surprised :
" As liveth God, Who hath redeemed my soul
Out of adversity ! When one told me,
' Lo, Saul is dead,' he thinking to have brought
Good tidings, I gave orders for his death,
Tho' sin had said his news would find reward :
How much more hence, when wicked men have slain,
A righteous person in his place of peace—
Shall I not, therefore, now require his blood
Of your grim hands, and sweep you from the earth ?"
Straight he commanded his young men to strike
The trembling culprits ; blind they fell and writhed
In death more violent than their victim met ;
Their hands and feet hewn from the twisted trunks ;
Impressed a ghastly warning on like rogues.
The head of Ish-bosheth was fitly tombed
Where silent valor rested. After which,
The elders of the tribes of Israel
All met at Hebron to anoint their king,
And offer David fealty and praise.
There human weakness and that worship paid
To heroes, not for nobler traits of mind,
But mere possession and results of force,
Instanced the folly of unthinking men,
And spurious pride so common to the race.
Now David, being thirty years of age,
Assumed his reign, which lasted forty years;
Aud having taken Zion, grew in power,

But still to Heaven accredited success.

While Joab led the legions of his king,
Besieging Rabbah and the Ammonites,
David directed at Jerusalem,
In state impressive with luxuriance.
Restless and wakeful as he walked by night,
To watch the stars in wonder from his roof,
A beauty less exalted crossed the sight,
And held the senses captive where he stood.
The fair Bath-sheba, on whose round smooth form
He passionate gazed, from every crystal shower
Appeared a jeweled queen amidst her bath,
And so he gloated on her sportive charms,
While she unconscious lingered for his glance.
Thus Satan tempted; and with selfish lust
The king, who knew her as Uriah's wife,
Fell false to honor in adultery.
The woman's husband was recalled from war,
To foster guilt; but going not near his house,
Was questioned thus by David: "Camest thou not
From journey? why then hast thou not gone home?"
To whom Uriah witlessly replied:
"The ark and Israel abide in tents;
And my chief, Joab, and thy servants, lord,
Are incamped in open fields; shall I then go
Into mine house to feast and claim my wife?
As thy soul liveth, I will not so fail."
Pretending favor, David entertained

And filled Uriah with excess of wine;
Yet drunk he went not home, but slept instead,
Among the servants of his guilty lord.
Then Satan prompted David, who despatched
A letter sealed to Joab, borne by him
Its contents doomed. Obedient thereto,
Joab assigned Uriah to the front,
Where danger gave assurance of his death,
The Hittite falling at the first rash charge.
And when Bath-sheba heard that he was dead,
She mourned for him in public, but rejoiced
At heart, because the king would wed her soon,
To make legitimate the child she bore.
But David's treachery displeased the Lord:
Most keen those issues were to wound in time
That one paternal breast, whose many scions
Antagonistic, vengeful, sensual,
Would make his life regretful to have reared,
Or ever to have had parental power.

Nathan, inspired with parable appeared
Before the king, and thus accosted him:
"There were two men, one rich, the other poor,
Who lived adjoining. One had many flocks;
His neighbor, nothing, save a small ewe lamb,
Which he had bought and nourished, till it grew,
The fondling of his bosom, dear as child.
A traveler came unto the wealthy man,
Who spared to take of his own numerous herd,

And dress as food ; but took the poor man's lamb,
And served it for the stranger that was come."
Then kindled David's wrath against the unjust,
And thus to Nathan he expressed himself :
"The man that hath done this must surely die !
He shall return the lamb four-fold, because
Having no pity, he compounded crime."
Straight Nathan charged to David : "Thour't the man.
Thus saith the Lord, 'I raised thee over hosts ;
Wherefore hast thou despised thy God's command,
And dared to do this evil in His sight ?
Thou hast killed Uriah and possessed his wife—
Hast slain him with the sword of enemies.
Behold, from thine own house the like shall point
Against thee ; thy false wives, before thine eyes,
Shall lie with neighbors in the sun's broad glare.
Thou didst it secretly ; but all the world
Shall mark the sequence of such infamy.'"
Meek, David said to Nathan : "I have sinned
Against the Lord." And so confessing, bowed.
When Nathan pitying said : "The Lord as well
Hath put away thy sin ; thou shalt not die.
Howbeit, since thou hast given His foes great chance
For blasphemy, the child shall not survive."
Despite this prophecy, the father prayed
To Heaven, and fasting lay upon the ground ;
As if atonement might redeem from death
His stricken child; Sad penance passed in vain—
That short life ended on the seventh day :

And servants feared to tell him, tho' he knew,
As grouped they whispered, that the boy was dead,
Then he arose from earth, and cleansed himself,
And changing his apparel, went for prayer
To place of worship—there refreshed his soul ;
Next to his dwelling hastened, and required
They set before him bread, of which he ate.
Some wondering asked: "What, master, hast thou done?
While yet the child lived, thou didst fast and weep;
But when he died thou didst arise and eat."
The prince of faith replied: "While yet he lived,
I mourned and fasted: for I said, who knows
But that God graciously may spare his life.
But now he is dead, and wherefore should I fast?
Can all my sorrow bring him back again?—
I shall go to him, he shall not return."
So David comforted his latest spouse,
Who brought forth Solomon, endowed by Heaven.

Time passed, and David's power and fame increased.
But flesh, the subject of infirmities,
Began to show hereditary taint,
Fraught with affliction for the ardent king.
That carnal aptitude long gratified,
Transmitted to his sons, inflamed with lust
Prince Amnon, whose unnatural desire
For Tamar chaste and queenly, vexed the brain,
As selfish heat ignored relationship.

Urged by an agent of the evil one,
A cousin Jonadab, false Amnon feigned
Distracting sickness; and when David came
To see and medicate his artful son,
He yielding heard the following request:
"I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come,
And cook here in my sight, that I may eat
At her own hand." The father humoring
What seemed a whim of fever, sent the maid
Unconscious to her ruin. Amnon forced,
And then rejected her; so follows hate,
Where lust not love infuriates the sense.
Loathing her now he cried: "Arise, begone!"
She, trembling, to the brute: "There is no cause:
This sin in sending me away is worse
Even than the other that thou didst to me."
But scorning, gruff he called his servant near,
Commanding him to put the woman out,
And bolt the door against her. She had on
A garment rich in colors; for with such
Were virgin daughters of the king attired:
But when the slave ejected her, and barred
The entrance, her bright garb distraction rent,
And putting ashes on her head, the hands
Were fain to hide those witnesses at woe
That blind from shame poured out their flood of tears.

Found by her brother Absalom, he enjoined
Forbearance, Amnon being a relative;

So in his house she desolate remained:
Tho' David learned of all, and chafed of heart.
Proud Absalom spoke neither good nor bad
Unto his evil brother; but matured,
In two years' space, his method of revenge.
Inviting all the king's sons to a feast,
And waiting until Amnon, flushed with wine,
Laughed merry, Absalom, by words agreed,
Ordered his servants; when they whipped out blades,
And slew the grunting Amnon where he sat.
Startled and shuddering, David's other sons
Rushed from the place, and mounting mules, rode off.
But tidings went before them to the king,
As usual magnified at each advance,
Till David heard the thunder of report
That all his sons were slain by Absalom.
Springing upon his feet, the frantic sire
Acted like mad, and fell again to earth;
While stood his servants dumb, and rent their clothes.
The subtle Jonadab, in league with sin,
Know different, and thus to favor spoke:
"Let not my lord suppose that all are slain;
For Amnon only of thy sons is dead.
By Absalom this vengeance hath been planned
From that foul day lust forced the virgin, Tamar.
Let not my lord the king distress his soul
With wild belief that all his sons are killed;
For Amnon's life alone is sacrificed."
As this, commotion from without was heard,

Of crowding people, that, like sound confused
From waters met, sped murmuring along;
For one high stationed had espied the sons
Of David coming, and the glad news given
To those beneath. The welcome words, as borne
By angel wings, soon reached the father's ear,
And before Jonadab had ceased to brag,
The king and his were in each other's arms.
But sad as loud their voices, whilst they wept,
Reciting that grim tragedy. Woe moved
The servants, who bore off their suffering king.

Now Absalom had fled; and three years passed,
Wherein his father mourned for him, and longed
In soul to go forth unto him; resigned,
As Amnon dead was not to be recalled.
Observing which, chief Joab secretly
Addressed a woman, wise in many ways,
To whom he told his plan whereby he hoped
She might prevail on David, not alone
To pardon, but to send for Absalom.
The woman, acting as instructed, draped
Herself in mourning, and like one bereaved,
Fell humbly to the ground, in David's sight,
And thus appealed to him: "Deign help, O King!"
"What aileth thee?" The saddened ruler asked.
And she: "I am a widow, long bereft.
Thy hendmaid had two sons; but they, alas,
Strove in a field together—none to part—

And one the other smote and slew him there.
My people rose against me, to demand
The life of him that laid his brother low.
And so they would destroy mine only heir,
And quench that one coal left me; tho' his sire
Hath no remainder left, nor name on earth."
"Go to thine house," the pitying parent said,
"And I will give command concerning thee."
But grateful pretext brought her further grace;
To which he added: "Whosoever saith
Aught unto thee, let him be brought to me,
And he shall not approach nor fret thee more."
Encouraged thus, she spoke: "I pray thee, king,
Remember God, and suffer not revenge
To wipe out blood, lest they destroy my son."
"As the Lord liveth," David reassured,
"Not one hair of thy son shall fall to earth."
Direct she argued: "Wherefore, my lord, dost thou
Against the people, then, of God hold out?
My king finds reasoning at fault, in that
He doth not fetch his banished home again.
We needs must sink, as water spilt on ground;
God not respecting person; yet doth He
Devise that His be not expelled from Him—"
What more she pleaded, wrought not on the king;
For swift his mind resolved, ere thus he deigned:
"Hide not from me the thing that I shall ask."
She honoring: "Let my lord the king demand."
Watching her features, David asked: "Is not

The hand of Joab with thee in all this?"
Surprised, she answered: "None can turn to right
Or left from aught my lord the king has spoken:
Thy servant Joab bade me, and conferred
Those words appealing thro' thine handmaid's mouth.
My lord is wise as with great Wisdom brought
By angel to the earth, beholding all."
Thoughtful the king turned from her, but his face
Confessed her generous mission was fulfilled.

Approaching Joab, the fond father said:
"Behold, I have assented to thy will—
Go, therefore, bring young Absalom again."
And Joab bowing low, acknowledged thus:
"To-day thy servant knoweth he hath found
Grace in thy sight, my lord, because the king
Hath deigned unto his servant this desire."
He arose and went to Geshur, bringing thence
The banished scion to Jerusalem;
Who there remained secluded in his home,
As David still denied him countenance.
But in all Israel no man was praised
As Absalom for beauty. Three strong sons,
And one fair daughter (Tamar named withal),
Were born to him; and so for two full years
He lived recluse, and saw not David's face.
When Joab would not further mediate,
The spiteful prince, long influenced by the Imp,
Sent servants to his valiant neighbor's field,

And they set fire to and destroyed the grain.
Then as excuse to Joab; he complained,
That since he was denied an audience
With David, it were better had he stayed
At Geshur, ending with a fresh appeal
To see his father tho' he died for it.
Joab forgave offence, and sought the king,
With whom he pleaded. Love vouchsafed at last,
And when proud Absalom appeared, and bent
Before his father, David kindly kissed
And blest the son, soon destined as his curse.

Thus favored, Selfishness made Absalom
More eager to obtain, tho' all besides
Should suffer. Knowing, as he did, his sire
Would never punish—nay, would even condone
Sedition in a son, or abdicate,
Before his offspring, whom he could not kill,
The vain prince flattered and seduced the throng,
And even fawned to people he despised ;
Announcing, that were he deputed judge,
All men might reach him and have justice done.
By slow degrees he won their simple hearts,
And then with lies to cover his design,
Begged that he be allowed to pay a vow
At Hebron ; David giving his consent.
But Absalom had posted spies throughout
The tribes to say : "As soon as ye shall hear
The sound of trumpet, then shall ye proclaim,

That Absalom in Hebron reigneth king."
Two hundred from Jerusslem were called,
And went with him in their simplicity:
They knew not anything.—The class is large;
Yet indolent of mind, amused with sound,
Its numbers cheer at bombast, serve deceit,
And still sustain the greatest ills of life.—
In Hebron the conspiracy grew strong,
And ignorant hundreds flocked to Absalom;
But soon was David startled by the news,
That so embittered his remaining years,
No earthly power could solace him again.

In that hard agony a father feels
When his own blood turns recreant, after years
Of love and labor spent—a waste of hope—
The king of Israel felt like some tried wretch
Who wakens from fair dream, to find the world
Arrayed against him, graceless, cold and vain.
He would have told his anguish, had not sense
Forbade the useless effort; but to save
His people from the sword, he counseled flight.
So silent from Jerusalem he passed,
With loyal subjects following, or advanced
Before him on the road. Submissive still
Unto his word, they camped at place remote;
But tossed in the gloom more dismal than the night.
Once more a shepherd led his flocks from harm;
Their young, like plaintive lambs, that followed slow,

Were special objects of sad interest.
Grateful to Ittai, the Gittite true,
David considerate spoke: "Why goest thou
With us? Return in safety to my son;
For thou'rt a stranger and an exile known.
Whereas thou camest but lately, should I wish
To lead thee whither fate may force my way?
Return thou, and pursuade thy brethren back:
Mercy and Truth be with thee!" Ittai, touched
By the sad utterance, not less warm replied:
"Surely in whatsoever place my lord
The king shall be, whether in life or death,
There also will thy servant be." He vowed,
And David, most for gratitude of faith,
Bade him go forward with his followers.
But now the country wept with one loud voice
When David and his people crossed the brook
Of Kidron, a small boundary to his realm.
Lo, Zadok bore the vessel sanctified
By covenant of God, to bless their march;
But David ordered: "Carry back the ark
Into Jerusalem; if I find grace
Of God, He will again both shew me that,
And His great habitation. Favoring not,
Behold I wait His Wisdom! let Him do
To me as seemeth good in His just Will."
Turning again to Zadok, he resumed:
"Art thou not seer? Return into the city
With thy two sons, Ahimaaz thine own,

And Jonathan, son of Abiathar.
See, I will tarry in the wilderness,
Till there come word from you to certify."
Abiathar and Zadok therefore took
The ark of God back to Jerusalem,
And there they tarried, though of other heart.

Up to Mount Olivet the king's ascent
Was moistened by his tears, and hundreds wept.
Here told that shrewd Ahitophel had joined
Among conspirators with Absalom,
The father prayed that Heaven might confound
That counsel deemed by men impregnable.
While bowed, to show devotion for his lord,
Approached sad Hushai, with his garment torn,
And earth upon his head. Yet he obeyed
When David reasoned thus upon his course :
"If thou goest on with me, then shalt thou be
A burden also ; but if thou return
And offer service before Absalom
As thou hast served his father hitherto,
Then mayest thou defeat Ahitophel
And thwart his counsel for me. Hast thou not
The priests, Abiathar and Zadok, there ?
To tell them whatsoever thou shalt hear
About the king's surroundings be thy care ;
They to Ahimaaz and Jonathan,
There also, shall report thy confidence,
And these bear safe all messages to me."

So Hushai, David's friend, returned at once
Into Jerusalem, ere the false son came.

When David reached Bahurim, there drew near
A man belonging to the house of Saul,
Whose name was Shimei. Following thus he cursed,
And still cast stones at David and his friends:
"Come out; thou bloody man of Belial!
The Lord returns upon thee all that blood
Of Saul; in whose stead thou hast reigned; His scorn
Hath given the kingdom into thy son's hand!
Thou art trapped in thine own mischief bloody man."
Then said Abishai to his silent Chief:
"Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king?
Let me go over and take off his head."
But David answered: "What have I to do
With you, ye sons of Zeruiah fierce?
No, let him curse, appointed by the Lord.
Who then shall say, 'Wherefore hast thou done so?'
Behold, the son, which came forth of my loins,
Seeketh my life—blame less this Benjamite—
Let him curse on; for Heaven hath bidden him.
It may be, God will look upon my woe,
And good requite me for his cursing here."
Thus David spoke, and bore continued taunts,
As Shimei followed, throwing stones and dust.

Jerusalem was entered by the mob
That followed Absalom. Ahitophel

Accompanied as his chief counselor:
Yet Hushai gained the confidence desired;
Not only sending David word of all,
But, helped by Heaven, he pleaded for delay,
And foiled Ahitophel's ambitious aim
To personally lead in sharp pursuit.
Chagrined at failure of his selfish scheme,
Ahitophel went home and hanged himself:
But no one mourned the gifted malcontent—
He passed from memory as he fled from earth.

David had crossed the Jordan; so advised
By Jonathan and Ahimaaz; who, being sent
With Hushai's warning to their honored king,
Were tracked and forced to hide them in a well,
Which woman's tact concealed by drying meal
Spread upon cloth that covered their retreat.
And meanwhile Absalom led Israel armed
Against his king and father—such is man,
Demoralized by Satan—such the greed
That stifles conscience and enslaves the soul
He appointed Amasa his chief at arms
Instead of Joab; some relationship
To that great warrior having weight therein.
So Israel's camp, disfigured Gilead,
While David with reluctance planned defense
Among the loyal bands that longed to advance.
One-third was Joab's ominous command;
Abishai an equal force controlled;

Last a like number under Ittai moved.
Their king, in person eager to attend,
The people prudent of his life dissuade;
And he submissive to the general plea
Stands by the gateside whilst brave thousands pass.
Fond to his captains he appealed, and thus:
"Deal gently for my sake with Absalom !"
All heard the father in his fervent charge,
But action drew their thoughts from sympathy.

Now battle shook the wood of Ephraim—
As when there follows swift on furious blasts
Pushing impetuous thro' deep forest boughs
Ten thousand discords—crashing trunks that wrench
Great branches from their sockets, thundering down
And crushing others in their dreadful way,
While shattering giants' chorus groans around:
Loud wails the tempest in the midst of all,
Or hisses with derision o'er the wreck—
So rushed the human whirlwind thro' that wood,
So swayed their arms, and multiplied harsh sounds;
Blows, curses, groans, and howls tumultuous joined.
Tho' rage incensed the sword, more victims fell
By natural agents: as in league against
Rebellious man, the thickets spread their nets
To trap those headlong; blinding, strangling scores.
Trees stretched huge arms to seize unwary forms,
And hurl them stunned or dead against the ground.
Thus Absalom was caught up from his beast;

But Mercy stayed the treacherous limb; so poised
Between the sky and earth, his wretched plight
Was marked by many—an example fit
To attest the proud pretender's helplessness.
His servants driven from the place, or slain,
Availed not; dazed, a brilliant moth he hung,
Entangled in a web he could not break.
One who had seen him thus, to Joab ran
And told the strange predicament. That chief,
Respecting neither David's charge, nor blood,
When crossed by rebel nature, strode at once
To where the prince hung helpless. Three sharp darts
He thrust into the captive's heart, whose groans
Deterred not others from like murderous blows.
Then Joab blew the trumpet, and his hosts
Returned ; for Joab held them from pursuit
Of Israel, since treason now was crushed.
Dead Absalom was thrown into a pit,
And covered with a nameless heap of stones :
Tho' in his life-time he had reared with pride
A pillar to perpetuate his name,
He yet was buried in contempt of man.

Ahimaaz, exultant, asked the right
To bear victorious tidings to his king ;
But Joab thus denied him : " Not this day ;
Because that son endeared to him is dead,
And later thou canst bear him better news."
Then fixed his glance on Cushi, and to him :

"Go, tell the king what thou hast seen." He ruled,
And Cushi, bowing respectful, hastened forth.
But when Ahimaaz again implored
Permission yet to follow Cushi's steps,
The simple claim was granted, and he sped
Across the plain, outrunning, though delayed,
The plodding messenger that first went out.
By what vague process can philosophers
Explain distinct presentiments that loom
Unwelcome, stern before the souls of men?
Runs there a conscious current thro' all space,
Communing spirit?—David, as he sat,
First in one place, thence to another moved,
Racked by the battle's discord from afar,
Fain would have yielded to his servant's prayer,
And gone within the walls to escape those sounds.
But whether ear sensated or surceased,
Deep in the chambers of his mind he heard
The cruel jars that filled him with alarm—
Felt every stroke endangering his son;
And, but for faith in Heaven, the tortured breast
Had realized how Absalom was slain.
Suspense that checks the breath and halts the heart,
Tired him with restless movement, till at length,
He sat between two gates—the better there
To see who first approached from any point;
Thinking perchance some fugitive might turn
To either gateway, and impart some news.
A watchman from the wall above cried down:

"I see a lone man running hither, sire!"
And David answered: "If he be alone,
There should be tidings in his mouth." The king
Drew near apace. Again the watchman cried:
"Behold another running, and alone!"
David replied: "He also bringeth word."
The watchman for a test of sight, resumed:
"Methinks the running of the foremost like
That of Ahimaaz." Then David calm:
"He is a good man, and good message bears."
While yet Ahimaaz towards them ran,
He called unto his master: "All is well!"
And soon, bent low to earth, this greeting gave:
"Blessed be Heaven, which hath delivered up
The men that strove against my lord the king!"
Straight David asked: "Is Absalom unharmed?"
To whom the first: "When Joab sent me forth,
I saw some tumult, but I know not whence."
His king commanded: "Turn aside, stand here."
Then Cushi came and uttered with respect:
"Tidings, my king! The Lord hath thee avenged
This day of all that rose against thy peace."
But David asked: "Is Absalom unharmed?"
And Cushi answered: "May thine enemies,
And all that rise against thee to do hurt,
Be even as that young man is." These words
Struck on the parent ear as doth a knell
When summoned shadows gather into night.
Groping his way, up to a chamber lone

Above the gate, he helpless went, and wept ;
And as he went, thus deep his sorrow spoke :
"O, my son Absalom ! my son, my son !
Would God I had died for thee, my Absalom !"

In pitying silence stood the messengers :
Their eyes from following David, tearful met ;
And tho' no sign or comment was exchanged,
Both slow returned to camp when Joab guessed,
Before they told him, how their mission fell.
The people's triumph into mourning changed—
They entered stealthily the city's bounds,
As men ashamed of conquest steal away.
Yet mourned the king, and covering his face,
Wept lonely, or in misery exclaimed :
"O my son Absalom—my son, my son !"
Then Joab sought his stricken lord, and said :
"Thou hast shamed this day the faces of thy friends,
Who saved thy life and household from the sword ;
In that thou lovest still thine enemies,
And hatest thy friends. While thou hast late declared
That thou regardest neither prince nor slave ;
Yet I perceive, if Absalom had lived,
Tho' we all had died, it would have pleased thee well.
Go forth, speak generous to thy loyal men :
For by the Lord I swear, if thou dost not,
There will not tarry one with thee this night !
Such will be worse for thee than all the ills
That have befallen from thy youth till now."

The king arose—went wordless to the gate;
And there the people thronged to honor him.
Defeated Israel now reflecting praised
That lord who fled his land to save his kind;
Their dead choice passing from the proselytes,
They next would meet and serve the living king.
He proffered all assurances of peace,
Even claimed them as his kindred, flesh and bone;
But weak to Amasa he sent a pledge
To make him chief at arms in Joab's place.
So all came subject as one heart again,
Conducting David with triumphant song
Across the Jordan. Once more strong in power,
He yet forgave his enemies. To prove
The selfish, with rare tact, he offered each
Some small consideration; and was pleased
To note, where sense of Justice still prevailed;
How generous impulse scorned unworthy gain.
Aged Barzillai, who had sustained
The king while he lay weak at Mahanaim,
Went over Jordan close by David placed;
Whom thus his friend and ruler deigned invite:
"Come thou with me even to Jerusalem—
And be my life-long guest." To whom the sage:
"How long have I live, that I should go?
Can one of four-score years discern between
Arts good and evil—can thy servant taste
What food he eats or drink required—can I
Appreciate the voice of singing men

And warbling women? Wherefore then should age
Become a burden to my lord the king?
Thy servant will go on a little way;
But why shouldst thou reward such interest?
Let me, I pray thee, thence retrace my steps,
To die in mine own city, and be laid
Beside my parents in their peaceful tomb.
Behold thy servant Chimham; let him go;
And do to him what shall seem good to thee.'
Assured thereon, and blessed with David's kiss,
The benefactor sought his humble home:
Nor thence desired to mingle with mankind,
Except as Love's communicant in hope.

What mean pretention found the rebels now?
They came before the king, and coolly asked:
"Why have the men of Judah stolen thee
Away, and led our king and household off,
Across the Jordan, with his retinue?"
Then those of Judah answered in disdain:
"Because the king is near of kin to us!
But wherefore thro' this matter comes your spleen?
Have we consumed at all of the king's cost?
Or hath he flattered us with any gift?"
The sophists of false Israel replied:
"We have more claim in David than is yours!
Why then did ye despise us, that our word
Should not be had in bringing back our king?"
Thus partisans contend, but strive to hide

With airy gauze their insincerity.
The men of Judah, by retort more fierce,
Intensified the quarrel. Belial—
A term for Selfishness—prevailed on one
Named Sheba, of the tribe of Benjamin,
To blow a trumpet and declare for war:
"We have no part in David," cried the dolt;
"In Jesse's son we scorn inheritance!
Back to the tents, O Israel; every man."
Again seceding, thousands left their king,
And followed Sheba like a band of sheep:
But all of Judah clave to David still,
From Jordan even to Jerusalem.
There David put his servant concubines
Apart, secluded from the sight of men;
And fed them, but no longer visited—
They lived in widowhood until their death.
He next bade Amasa convoke the strength
Of Judah, to be present in three days:
But Amasa so tarried, that the time
Appointed passed for naught; and David loth,
Said to Abishai: "Soon, Sheba false,
May do more harm than Absalom hath done:
Take thou my servants, and pursue the wretch,
Lest fenced, he escape, and plot against our weal."
The true adherent hastily obeyed;
And after him went Joab's mighty bands,
The Cherethites and Pelithites, all armed,
To take the traitor Sheba. At a halt,

Amasa went before them, urged by pride,
But Joab's garment which he had put on,
Was girded unto him, with sword and sheath,
And as he walked, the heavy blade fell out.
To Amasa advancing, Joab spoke :
"Art thou in health, my brother?" Speaking thus,
He feigned to embrace his rival, while the sword,
Unseen by Amasa, was thrust with force
Into his vitals. Out his bowels ran
Upon the ground : without a second stroke,
Fell Amasa to earth, and groaning died.

So Joab and Abishai took command ;
But as the curious paused to view the dead,
A follower bore the body to one side,
From out the highway where it lay in blood,
And cast a cloth upon it. Thence the drove,
Unheeding, followed Joab to pursuit.
They reached the city where rebellious crowds,
Applauding Sheba, thought themselves secure.
A bank of earth cast up by Joab's men,
Soon fronted and protected them: huge shafts,
On sturdy shoulders borne, were launched with force
Against the wall, that moaned at every stroke,
And trembled to its base. The rioters
Within surprised, disbanded stood in fear;
But from the rampart cried a woman's voice:
"Hear, hear; I pray, bid Joab to come near,
That I may speak with him." When he drew nigh,

She questioned: "Art thou Joab?" "I am he,"
Replied the leader. Earnest then she begged:
"O hear thine handmaid's word!" The chief: "I hear."
Her clear voice followed: "They were wont to say
In olden time, 'Ask surest counsel here;'
And so they ended matters. I am one
Of many peaceable in Israel:
Thou wouldst destroy a city, mothers, babes;
But why consume the Lord's inheritance?"
And Joab answered: "Far be it from me,
That I should crush out or destroy for lust.
The matter is not so: but there is one
Named Sheba, who hath lifted his base hand
Against King David! yield that rogue alone,
And I will spare the city and depart."
Resolved, the heroine promised thus: "Behold,
His head shall be thrown over unto thee."
Straight to the masses her address found way,
As Wisdom aided her. Ere long the head
Of Sheba, cut from off its shuddering trunk,
By men that smote remorseless for themselves,
Flew grim and bloody over the dark wall,
And rolled upon the ground at Joab's feet.
A trumpet blown, his warriors retired
Into their tents for rest; before the march
Triumphant to Jerusalem was made.

War ended, famine followed in its wake;

And David influenced by the Gibeonites,
Whom Saul had battled to exterminate,
Sent seven of the dead king's sons to death—
A dread atonement for paternal crime.
The son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth,
Was spared thro' virtue of that sacred bond
Which Love dispensed to David and the dead;
Still kept to join them in eternity.
Age, like a blight now settled on the king:
Nor was his earlier prudence manifest
When startled by occasion. Once again
The Philistines sent challenges of war,
And David with his servants met their chief,
A giant who had surely slain the king,
Had not Abishai watchful succored him,
And killed the Titan. Now with one great voice,
The men of David sware: "Thou shalt no more
Go out with us to battle, nor thus quench
The light of Israel." David heard their will,
As parent whose infirmity submits;
And hence contented him in praising God,
With psalms of glory, that should last thro' time.
Like that of Moses thus his song began:
"My Rock, my Fortress, my Deliverer—
Is God, my strength; and in Him will I trust!
He is my Shield, the Herald of my hope,
My Tower and Refuge from all violence—
My Savior. I will call unto the Lord,
Most worthy to be praised: so shall I be

Delivered from mine enemies. When waves
Of death encompassed me, the floods of men
Ungodly made me fear; the ills of hell
Environed me; the snares of death detained.
In my distress I called upon the Lord;
And from His Temple He did hear my voice.
Then the earth trembled; the foundation even
Of heaven moved and shook, because of wrath.
He bowed the heavens and came down in power;
And darkness mantled all beneath its God.
He rode upon a cherub, soared on high,
And He was seen upon the wings of wind.
He made pavilions dark about Him fold,
The waters dark, and thick clouds of the skies.
Thro' all before Him kindled coals of fire.
From heaven Jehovah thundered—the Most High
Uttered His voice. And He sent arrows forth,
And scattered them; lightning confounding them.
The channels of the sea appeared, the broad
Foundations of the world were bared to view,
At His rebuking, at His breath's great blast.
He ordered from above and drew me out
Of many waters. He delivered me
From my strong enemy, and from the men
That hated me: for they were still too strong.
They hindered me amidst calamity:
But Justice was my Stay. He brought me forth
Into an ample place—delivered me
Because He found delight in my designs.

The Lord rewarded me according to
My righteousness : For I have kept His ways,
Not wickedly departed from my God.
His judgments were before me : and His laws
I did not dare depart from. To be fit,
I have held myself from mine iniquity.
Therefore according to my cleanness here
His gracious recompense is given me.—
Thy mercy lights upon the merciful—
With upright man Thou wilt show Thyself upright.
To natures pure Thou showest Thy purity ;
Yet to the froward, Thine unsavory power.
And the afflicted people wilt thou save :
But eying the haughty, Thou dost bring them down.
Thou art my lamp, O Lord ! to lighten my gloom.
By Thee I conquered troops—aye, cleared a wall.
The way of God is perfect, tried, the Word:
A Buckler He to all that trust in Him.
For who is God, except the Lord of all?
Who as a Rock endureth, save our God?
He is my Strength; He maketh my way perfect—
Nerveth my feet as lightly as the hind's;
And setteth me upon high places safe.
He taught my hands to war; so that a bow
Of steel is broken by mine arms. The shield
Of my salvation Thou hast given me:
Thy gentleness hath made me great. Thou hast
Enlarged my steps; and yet I did not slip.
I have pursued and beaten mine enemies,

Nor turned again until I had destroyed.
I have consumed them, they could not arise.
Yea, they are fallen underneath my feet.
For Thou hast girded me with strength to strike:
All that rose up against hast Thou subdued.
Their necks were given, that I might destroy
The enemies that hated me. They looked,
But there was none to save, unto the Lord,
But them He answered not. Then small as dust
I beat them—stamped them as the mire of earth,
And scattered them abroad. Thou hast as well
Redeemed me from my people's many strifes,
And kept me to control the heathen yet:
A race which I knew not shall honor me.
Strangers shall bend themselves unto my words—
At once shall hear and be obedient.
But they will fade away, while fear invades
Their hiding-places. Sovereign is the Lord:
Exalted be this Rest of my salvation.
God is it that avengeth, bringeth down
The many to submission under me,
And leadeth safely from my many foes:
Thou hast lifted me above them that rose up
Against, and saved me from the violent man.
Therefore I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord,
Among heathen, I will sing Thy praise.
He is the Tower of safety for His king!
Still gracious to our seed for evermore."
Thus sang the aged ruler sinking fast;

But wisest of all utterance followed this,
When Israel's sweetest psalmist chimed with truth:
"Let him that ruleth over men be just,
Reflecting, ruling in the fear of God.
And as the light of morning, when the sun
Riseth unclouded, shall his power extend."

But David weaker, found temptation strong;
Pride moved him—he would know how numerous
His subjects were; and so to Joab said:
"Go thou throughout the tribes of Israel,
From Dan to Beersheba, and number them,
That I may know how many own my sway."
Joab protested: "Now the Lord thy God
Increase His people, from whatever sum
They mount already to, a hundred fold,
That thou, my king, mayest see: but why, my lord
Dost thou delight in such a thing as this?"
Vain, notwithstanding the king's word prevailed
Against his captain and all counselors;
Hence Joab, joined by leaders of the host,
Went forth to number the great multitude.
Jordan was crossed; they camped in Aroer;
Then came to Gilead and surrounding lands,
Even to strong Tyre and all the villages
Where dwelt the Hivites and bold Canaanites,
Going south by Judah to Beersheba.
Nine months and twenty days were spent before
Their count was rendered at Jerusalem;

And thirteen hundred thousand was the sum
Of valiant men in all the tribes combined.
But vanity considered not how soon
Superior agents might reduce that throng,
Until grim pestilence with dreadful sweep
Cut down its hundreds, thousands at a stroke.
Then suppliant David cried unto his God :
" Lo, I have sinned, my Lord ! but these poor sheep,
What have they done ? Ah, send Thine angel dread
Against me, and against my father's house."
No prayer that breathes self-sacrifice is scorned :
The plague was stayed, and Mercy's power benign
Infused devotion thro' the bands of faith.

Not long was David to remain with man ;
Yet feeble as he passed, bright promise shone
Adown his life's decline. To Solomon,
Whom Wisdom had already beamed upon,
The sinking patriarch consigned his charge ;
Conscious of that ability to rule,
Which later won the praises of a world,
And founded principles that still survive.
But Glory deigned to his prophetic line,
A Son far greater, Whose behests sublime,
All peoples of the earth would bend before—
Whom time would reverence as eternal King,
And sainted myriads acclaim their Lord.

BOOK XI.

Assist me yet, supreme Intelligence,
To soar above, beyond material fields,
Far out upon Thine infinite with power
Transported; thro' those spiritual realms
That end not, thought may range sustained by grace,
And mingle with the innumerable beings
Whose chaste existences delight even Thee.
O, cleanse and fit me for the glorious flight
To Love's extending amplitudes of bliss!
As nothing gross may hope to so aspire,
Nor lift, indeed, its sense beyond the stars,
To where Thine angel, Order, ancient light,
Directs this province of majestic spheres.
Thence Nature, generous spouse, appoints her ways
To meet his principles and serve the Will,
While Beauty, their bright offspring, deigned of Heaven
For clear reflection of divinest grace,
Is ever present in their noble schemes.
Forth, as his countenance imparting rays
Impels bright aids to duty, swift they flash
Afar; some borne on meteors to convoke
Constituent nebulæ and form new states;
Others with comet trains resplendent sent
To enrich or regulate more distant suns.
Yet such the power of Order, that a glance

Electric passes to the utmost bound
Of matter which restored again returns
Thro' motion an equivalent of force.
Still to the Sovereign, as in fair mirage,
Doth Order constantly display His works,
And evermore receives that principle
Without which motive must exhaust itself.
Well might the mind rejoice but to pursue
Kind Nature thro' her countless offices ;
From the protection of incipient life
Whose very dangers, needs and ends not scorned
Engage the patient Mother's constant care,
To her disposal of consummate things ;
For like judicious Truth commands this Queen.
Ethereal Beauty as a princess graced
Attendeth ever the fond Governess,
And where she glows new splendors spring to light,
And decorate each circumstance of change.

But thought wings onward from these boundaries
Into expanse unlimited, and leaves
The planets in bright undulating play
(Their many movements are electrical),
Majestic circling an allotted space.
Chromatic radiance surrounds the whole,
Thro' whose fine shades they journeying partake.
Now, sudden as the lightning startles sight,
Is fancy met in daring flight beyond,
By dazzling marvels that confound at first,

But strengthen soon the soul that contemplates.
For light, transcendent to corporeal beams,
Diffusing thro' infinitude imparts
To beings scarcely denser, conscious rays;
And they, while countless thro' each other viewed,
All bear divine resemblance both to God
And one another. Individual grace
Withal is found by those beatified,
Tho' natural process may not note the same.
Description were unworthy to define
As imagery to liken phases high
Vouchsafed to spirit when celestial joys
Surround, what time Omnipotence prepared
The advent of His Love so long desired—
That mighty moment which to ready earth
Brought happiness—secured to man's estate
Peace, after triumph over Selfishness.

Who shall enunciate the grand benefice
Advanced by Heaven when that day arrived
For our deliverance from the power of Sin?
Angelic voices could but intimate
The sovereign blessing, when their chant arose
And rang throughout their infinite abode:
"Glory unto the Highest! praise Him all;
For God so loveth man, that He hath sent
His only Son begotten in the Word
To save a world from wickedness and woe—
Hosanna to the Highest!" Thus they sang

Rejoicing far as thought can ever reach,
And following in bright order Love divine
To celebrate the great Nativity.
For Gabriel honored had already passed,
Illustrious messenger, from Heaven to earth,
And sought the virgin Vessel for the Lord.
At Nazareth retired as Joseph's spouse
Was Mary reverenced and saluted thus:
"Hail, highly favored soul, the Lord with thee—
Blessed art thou among women." With the Power
Mary was troubled, questioning in mind
What form of salutation this should be.
On whom the heavenly herald to inspire
Beamed: "Fear not, Mary—thou hast favor found
With God. Behold, thou shalt conceive and bear
The holiest Fruit, a Son, and name Him Jesus."
Continued Gabriel yet to amplify
The reign of David passing down to Him
Whose kingdom merciful would never end;
She, chaste one, puzzled until thus informed:
"The Holy Ghost upon thee shall descend,
And Highest Power shall overshadow thee!
That sacred Life which thence is born of thee
Shall claim His title as the Son of God."
With modest meekness Mary yielding said:
"Behold the humble handmaid of the Lord;
Be it unto me according to thy word."
And Gabriel departed from her side
Only to join descending Love in praise

Amongst bright myriads who with Wisdom came
Rejoicing to that promise most divine.
What strange exceptions marked the heavens then—
How beauteous as a broad triumphal arch
Spread wide the azure canopy! how glowed
Creation's suns, approached by Light supreme!
What pulse of gladness thro' this waiting world
Announced her Bridegroom's coming—surged the tides
That heaved her mighty bosom! Yet would pride
Be given no instance by Divinity:
Established folly so antagonized
Must feel a wound it never would survive.

Devoted Joseph in his sleep beheld
And was constrained by Gabriel to take
His bride of prospect unto him as wife,
Since her conception thro' the Holy One
Obtained—that Jesus was to be His name,
For He should save the people from their sins—
Observe the period when eternal Love,
Despite desire for our spontaneous worth
Till then restraining, to deliver us
Descended and became the Son of man—
His Savior but his Servant even from birth.
Rome taxed her provinces; the groaning earth
Labored for vanity; sad multitudes
Surrendered rights, necessities to glut
A brood of cormorants that Satan fledged,
Whose vulture instinct borrowed eagle plumes

To swoop relentless over every land.

Joseph from Nazareth, in Galilee,
Went to Judea, unto Bethlehem,
(Being of the house and lineage of David)
To pay his portion ; Mary, his espoused,
Accompanied. And so it was while there
She yielded to the world her gracious Son.
The crowded inn could spare no room for them ;
But—Provident humilty—a shed
Unknown to sullying pride afforded all
Required for Christ's admission to the world.
With swaddling wrapped, and in a manger laid,
The Holy Spirit in a child reposed :
Yet by this lowly birth Sin's arrogance
Received its condemnation. Power above
Moved potent for His conquest from the first.
And, lo, an angel of the Lord came down
Upon some shepherds near, who watched by night
Their silent flocks; and glory shone around
That awed the herdsmen into reverence.
"Fear not;" assured the seraph: "for, behold,
I bring to you good tidings of great joy
To all the race. For unto man is born
This hour in David's place a Savior great,
And Who is Christ the Lord. As sign of which,
Nigh ye shall find a babe in swaddling wrapped,
And lying in a manger." Suddenly

Above the angel, multitudes as bright
Swept beaming thro' the sky ; nor might its stars,
Now dimmed behind such sheens, provide each one
A diadem, so numerous they blazed,
The while thus singing, pouring praise to Love :
" Glory to God in the highest ! and on earth
Peace, good will toward men." As if the poles
From active forces drawn, might radiate hues
Whose splendors circled high from east to west·
And joined Aurora's blush with Hesper's charms,
Those heavenly myriads illumined night ;
But ere they vanished thro' the vail of space,
Upon blue ether glittering characters,
Their forms composing, set forth to the world
What glories would succeed to all mankind
Related by the Word in brotherhood.
At their departure, evening seemed to lapse
Into unusual gloom : the shepherds, dazed
Till now, repaired to Bethlehem with haste,
And in the birthplace reverent Joseph found
With Mary bending near in virgin grace.
The tints of girlhood lingered on her face
Which meek in modest beauty charmed the view ;
Yet thought sublimed those eyes of innocence,
And faith and patience hovered where she moved.
But, sovereign honor, to behold that Child
Who sanctified the manger where He lay—
That visible Embodiment of Love
Divine in feeble tenement of flesh—

It blessed enough to inspire the fervent lips
Of unlearned shepherds with such eloquence,
That those who heard them marveled at the words
So wondrous coming from their artless tongues.
Thus glorifying God they went again
To keep their flocks, now of His fold themselves.

The simple were not only drawn around :
Three learned men, directed from the East
Made journey to Jerusalem, and inquired
Of Herod, reigning tyrant at the time:
"Where is He that is born King of the Jews?
For we have seen His natal star abroad,
And thereby led, are come to worship Him."
When Herod heard, fear blanched his guilty brow,
And all Jerusalem like trouble felt.
So after summoning the chief priests and scribes,
Fear, ignorance and self-concern in state
Demanded of them where Christ should be born.
They answering : "In Bethlehem ; for thus
The prophet writeth, 'And thou, Bethlehem,
Art not the least among the grand of Juda:
For out of thee shall come a Governor
That shall direct my people Israel.'"
Then Herod privately, for mean design,
Recalled the wise men, and inquired of them
In strict detail what time the star appeared.
And sending them to Bethlehem, he said :
"Go and search diligently for the Child ;

And when ye have found Him, bring me word again,
That I may come and worship Him myself."
Hence they departed pleased; and lo, the star—
Dispensed by Order as a glowing guide—
Which they saw first, beamed hope along the way,
At length suspended o'er the lowly shed
Where Jesus was. Rejoiced to meet such grace,
From its mild rays they entering met the Light
Which soon would banish darkness from the world,
And warm and blossom thro' humanity.
Here bowed in worship of an infant King,
The wise presented figurative gifts,
Gold, frankincense and myrrh, significant
Of virtuous worth superior to decay,
Of hope whose ardent breath ascends in prayer,
Of Mercy's ministrations to the weak.
Due homage paid as gratitude, they arose
And from the Presence reverently withdrew;
But warned by Heaven to shun Herod's place,
They went another way to their own land.

Scarce had they gone when Joseph, sunk in sleep,
Beheld the angel of the Lord, who said:
Arise, take Jesus and His mother hence,
And flee into Egypt; tarry there until
I bring thee word: for Herod will attempt
To take the Life entrusted to thy care.
Calm he arose, and took them forth by night,
Departing unto Egypt: there remained

Until the death of Herod—prophecy
Was thus fulfilled as written long before,
That, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son."
But Herod, when he found that he was foiled
By Wisdom, was exceeding wroth, and sent,
And slew all children around Bethlehem,
From two years old and under, covering
That time the wise men said Christ's star appeared.
Vain butcher, he was soon to meet a Judge
More terrible than all his cruelties,
Whose martyred innocents, baptized in blood,
Arrayed above, abashed the monster's soul
Which self-doomed sought the shades, where memory's woes
At least might chafe unseen—a mercy deemed.

Revisited by Gabriel after this,
Joseph as bidden brought the Child of grace
And His meek mother back to Israel's land.
Still fearing Archelaus, who assumed
His father Herod's sway and ruled Judea;
The prudent Joseph, warned by Heaven, chose
To enter Nazareth, in Galilee,
Where, as an humble carpenter, he toiled.
Think of the youthful nature there employed,
Whose thoughts immortal, gentle as white doves,
Flew over earth's conditions—sought for man
A better state—resolved upon a course
Of tribulation glorious as severe!

Imagine, while the ringing hammer falls,
Or humming saw divides, or chirping plane
Shears curling fibres from the fragrant wood,
What aspirations rose from duty there—
When o'er each structure fashioned, Vision hung
Some model fair of man regenerate,
Or noble edifice of Christian Life!
Already had the earlier points of Truth
Astonished doctors, when at twelve years old
Christ tarried in their Temple, hearing them
And questioning. When found, His mother asked:
"Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? behold,
Joseph and I have sought Thee sorrowing."
And He, with Wisdom too profound for them:
"How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not
That I must be about my Father's work?"
Yet urged, He went with them to Nazareth,
Obedient and subject unto both.
So Jesus grew to manhood; in all ways
Dependent, to exemplify and teach
Humanity; considering those events
Attending His great mission upon earth.

Now John the Baptist (influenced by Love
Before his birth, matured in Wisdom's time)
Called thousands to salvation, preaching thus:
"Repent ye! Heaven's kingdom is at hand.
For this is he of whom Esaias said,
'The voice of one crying in the wilderness,

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His
paths.'
The valleys shall be filled, the hills brought low,
And God's salvation shall attend all flesh."
Then said he to the multitude that came
To be baptized of him: "O generation
Of vipers, who hath warned you thus to flee
From wrath impending? Bring forth rather fruits
Worthy of repentance, and say not within,
'We have Abraham as father:' for I say,
That God is able of these stones to raise
Up children unto Abraham. The axe
Is laid unto the root of every tree
Which beareth not good fruit; they are hewn down,
And cast into the fire." The people asked:
"What shall we do then?" "He that hath two coats,'
Was answered, "shall impart to him with none;
He that hath meat, give likewise to the poor."
And when the publicans inquired, he said:
"Exact no more than is appointed you."
Unto those armed: "Do violence to none;
Accuse not falsely; let your pay content."
And all mused whether he were Christ or not.
John answered thought, thus: "I indeed baptize
With water; but One mightier than I
Cometh, Whose shoes I am not fit to bear—
He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost:
Truth's fan is in His hand and He will purge
His floor, and garner well the living wheat;

But fire unquenchable will burn the chaff."
Then cometh Jesus to the side of John,
To be baptized by him, and edify
The same. But John with reverence deferred:
"I have more need to be baptized of Thee,
And comest Thou to me?" Yet Jesus said:
"Suffer it now to be so: for it thus
Becometh us to work all righteousness."
The Baptist his chaste rite conferred thereon,
And Christ moved straightway from the sacred flood:
When, lo, the heavens opened unto Him—
Spirit divine descended like a dove,
And came upon Him, while on high was heard:
This is my beloved Son, in whom I am
Well pleased.—
Thence Jesus of His Spirit led
Into the wilderness as other men,
Was tempted by the devil. Fasting there
For forty days and nights, when hunger craved,
The tempter came to Him, and thus proposed:
If Thou'rt the Son of God, command these stones
To be made bread. At which Christ answered meek:
As written, Man shall not live by bread alone,
But by whate'er proceedeth out of God.
Now Spirit-borne unto the city blessed,
And placed upon its Temple's pinnacle,
Temptation dared again to try Him, thus:
If Thou be Son of God, cast Thyself down:

For it is written, He shall give wise charge
Concerning Thee unto His angel bands:
And they shall bear Thee up, lest any time
Thou dash Thy foot against a stone. Hereat,
Jesus responded: It is written too,
Thou shalt not tempt the Lord Thy God. Again
Was Spirit taken to a mountain high,
The devil showing all kingdoms of the world,
And glory of them; proffering unto Him:
All these I offer, if Thou wilt fall down
And worship me. Then Christ more resolute:
Get thee hence Satan! for it is enjoined,
Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God alone,
Him only shalt thou serve. Thus, Selfishness'
Condemned from Jesus went, and angels came
And ministered to Him victorious.

John, whose just censure wounded reigning pride,
Was seized, imprisoned and condemned to die;
That Herod's lustful tribe might be avenged.
But Jesus journeyed into Galilee,
And so endorsed Isaias where he saith,
'The race which sat in darkness saw great light;
To them whom death's shade shrouded light is
sprung.'
From that time Jesus of repentance preached,
Proclaiming Heaven's kingdom near at hand.
Beside the sea He found two fishermen,
Simon, called Peter, and his brother Andrew,

Casting a tangled net into the tide.
Thus Jesus claimed their service: "Follow me,
And I will make you fishes of mankind."
At once they left their nets and followed Him.
Going on from thence, he saw two brethen more,
Named James and John, the sons of Zebedee,
Upon their father's vessel mending nets;
He called them, and immediately they quit
Their father's side, and followed Him devout.
And Jesus went about all Galilee,
Teaching in synagogues, and preaching grace,
Love, healing any manner of disease.
His fame went forth throughout all Syria;
Afflicted numbers thronging were relieved,
Great multitudes drawn followed him about—
From Galilee and from Decapolis,
And from Jerusalem, and from Judea,
Even from beyond the Jordan, wondering.

Christ, seeing the throngs, went up unto a mount:
Whence, joined by His disciples, He thus framed
Divine delivery to enlighten man,
Rapt thousands listening wonder-bound below:
'Blessed the poor in spirit are: for theirs
Is Heaven's kingdom. Blessed they that mourn:
For they shall be consoled. Blessed are the meek:
For earth is their inheritance. Blessed they
That thirst and hunger after righteousness:
They shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful:

For they shall mercy find. Blessed are the pure
In heart : for they shall see God. Blessed be
All peacemakers : they shall be called God's children.
Blessed are they that persecution bear
For Virtue's sake : their kingdom is in Heaven.
Blessed are ye when men shall pesecute
And scoff against you falsely for my sake.
Rejoice : for great is your reward above—
So persecuted they the seers of old.
Ye are the salt of eaath : but if the salt
Have lost in flavor, whence shall it be saved ?
It is thenceforth but fit to be cast out,
And to be trodden under foot of man.
Ye are the light beholden of the world.
A city that is set upon a hill
Cannot be hid, Neither do men who light
A candle, put it underneath a bushel,
But on a candlestick ; it giveth thus
Its light unto all that are in the place.
Let yours so shine that men may see good works ;
And glorify your Father above all,
Think not that I am come to end the law—
I come not to destroy, but to fulfiill.
For verily I say unto you, Till heaven
And earth pass, jot or title no wise
Shall from the laws pass, till all be fulfilled.
Whoever therefore even shall break the least
Of these commandments; and shall teach men so,
He shall be called the least in heavenly Life :

But whosoever shall observe and teach
The same shall be in Heaven's kingdom great.
I say to you, Except your righteousness
Exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees,
Ye shall in no wise enter into Heaven.
Ye have heard that it was said by them of old,
'Thou shalt not kill:' and whosoever killeth,
'Of judgment shall be guilty.' But I say
To you, that whosoever angry is
Against his brother shall be in danger of
The judgment: or who to his brother saith,
'Thou fool,' shall be in danger of perdition.
Therefore if by the altar with thy gift
Thou shouldst remember that thy brother hath
Some claim against thee; leave the gift, and go—
First to thy brother become reconciled,
Then come and offer at the shrine thy gift.
Agree with thine adversary at once,
While thou art in the way with him, lest soon
Such adversary lead thee to the judge
And he deliver thee to officer,
And thou be thus imprisoned. Verily,
I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means
Come out thence, till thou hast paid the fullest cost.
Ye have heard that it was said in olden time,
'Thou shalt not commit adultery:' but I say,
That whosoever looketh on a woman
To lust desiring hath committed such
With her already in his guilty heart.

If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out,
And cast it from thee: for it profits more
That one of thine eyes perish than that all
Thy body should be cast into the abyss.
If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off,
And cast it from thee: for there is a gain
If one of thy weak members be destroyed
And not that thy whole body be consumed.
It hath been said, 'Whoever shall renounce
His wife, let him give her a written divorce:'
But I say unto you, who puts away
His wife, except for infidelity,
Causeth her to commit adultery:
And whosoever marrieth one divorced
Committeth like adultery. Ye have heard,
'Thou shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:'
But I say unto you, swear not at all;
Neither by Heaven; for it is God's throne:
Nor by the earth; for it is His as well:
Nor by Jerusalem—city of the King.
Nor shalt thou swear by thine own head, because
Thou canst not make one hair grow white or black.
But let your weighed communication be,
Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoe'er is more
Than these implieth evil. Ye have heard
As said, 'For an eye an eye, for a tooth a tooth:'
But I say unto you, resist not wrong:
To him who smites thee on the right cheek, turn
The other also. And if any man

Will sue thee at the law, and take away
Thy coat, invest him also with thy cloak.
Should any one compel thee to attend a mile,
Go with him twain. Give to whom asketh thee,
And from him that would borrow turn thou not.
Ye have heard it said, 'Thou shalt thy neighbor love,
And hate thine enemy.' But I say unto you,
Love even your enemies, bless them that curse,
Do good to them that hate, and pray for them
Which persecute you ; that ye may be yet
The children of your Father merciful :
He maketh his sun to rise on bad and good,
And raineth on the just as on the unjust.
For if ye love them only which love you,
What claim have ye ? do not the publicans
The same ? And if ye only shall salute
Your brethren, what effect ye more than they ?
Do not the worldliest publicans even so ?
Be therefore noble, as your Father is,
Who sums Perfection and Nobility.

"Take heed that ye do not your alms in sight
Of men : or ye have no reward of Heaven.
Therefore, when duty moveth, trumpet not
As hypocrites do in the synagogues
And thro' the streets, that they may spread their fame.
Verily, verily, they have their reward.
When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know
What thy right hand bestoweth : that thine alms

May be in secret : and thy Father shall
Himself reward thee openly, seeing all.
And when ye pray, be not as hypocrites ;
Who standing, plead in synagogues and streets,
That men may note them. Verily I say,
They have their fit reward. But when thou prayest,
Enter thy closet, shut the door, and pray
Unto thy Father, which in secret seeth ;
And He shall openly reward thy prayer.
Yet when ye pray, use not vain repetitions,
As heathens : for they think they shall be heard
For their much speaking. Be not, therefore, like
These vain ones : for your Father knoweth what things
Ye will have need of, even before ye ask.
After this manner, therefore, pray to Him :
'Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be
Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day
Our daily bread. And pardon us our debts
As we forgive our debtors. Lead us not
Into temptation, but deliver us
From evil.'—For even as ye forgive
Men's trespasses, your heavenly Father will
Forgive you also. When ye fast, be not
As hypocrites, of a sad countenance :
For they disfigure them but to appear
In sight of men to suffer. Verily
I say unto you, they have their reward.
But thou, when fasting, mayst anoint thine head,

And wash thee bright, that thou seem unto men
Filled, as thou shalt be with thy Father's grace.—
Lay not up treasures for yourselves on earth,
Where moth and rust impair, and thieves invade:
But lay up treasures for yourselves in heaven,
Where neither moth, nor rust, nor thieves molest:
For where your treasure is, your heart will be.
The lighter of the body is the eye:
So if thine be single, thy whole being
Shall be replete with light. But if thine eye
Be evil, all thy nature shall be dark,
If, therefore, darkness be thine only light,
How dread that state! No man can serve two masters;
For he will hold to one, and hate the other.
Ye cannot serve your God and mammon too.
Therefore I say, take no thought for your life,
What ye shall have to eat, or what to drink;
Nor for the body, what ye shall put on.
Is not the spirit more than meat and such?
Behold the fowls of air: for they sow not,
Nor do they reap, nor gather into barns;
And yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.
Are ye not even better than the birds?
Which one of you by taking thought, can add
One cubit to his stature? And again,
Why take ye thought for raiment of decay?
Consider well the lilies of the field,
How grown; they toil not, neither do they spin:
And yet I say, that even Solomon

In all his glory never was arrayed
Like one of these. Wherefore, if God so grace
The grass of earth, which flourisheth to-day
And on the morrow wasteth under heat,
Shall He not you, O ye of little faith?
Therefore doubt not, nor ask, 'What shall we eat,
What drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed?'
(For after all these things the selfish seek:)
Your heavenly Father knoweth all your needs.
But seek ye first the government of God—
His righteousness; and all else shall be given.
Hence for the morrow take no needless thought:
For its requirements will themselves appear.
Sufficient to a day is the ill thereof.

"Judge not your fellow, that ye be not judged.
For as ye mete, it shall be measured you.
And why beholdest thou the mote that checks
A brother's vision, but considerest not
The beam within thine own eye? Canst thou say,
'Let me remove the mote from out thine eye,'
And yet behold a beam within thine own?
O hypocrite, first from thine own eye pluck
The beam; and then thou shalt more clearly see
To cast the mote from out thy brother's eye.
Give not that which is holy unto the dogs;
Cast not your pearls before the swine, lest they
Trample them under foot, and turn again
To rend you.—Ask, and it shall be given you;

Seek, (worthily of Truth) and ye shall find;
Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.
For every one that asketh right receiveth;
And he that seeketh, findeth; and for him
That knocketh, grace shall open unto hope.
What man is there of you, whom if his son
Ask bread, will give a stone to him? or if
He ask a fish, will give, instead, a snake?
If ye then, being imperfect, see to grant
Good gifts unto your children, how much more
Your heavenly Father shall vouchsafe to them
That ask Him?—Henceforth all things whatsoever
Ye would that men should do you, do ye
Even so to them: for this is all the law.
Enter ye at the straight gate: wide the one,
And broad the way, that leadeth to destruction,
And many there be which go in thereat:
For strait the gate, and narrow is the way
Which leadeth unto Life, few finding it.
Beware of false seers, clad as sheep, which come
To you, while inly they are ravening wolves.
Ye cannot fail to know them by their fruits.
Do men pick grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?
Even so each good tree bringeth forth good fruit;
But a corrupt tree yieldeth evil still.
A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit;
Nor can a tree corrupt bring forth good fruit—
It is hewn down and cast into the fire.
Not every one that sayeth unto me,

'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into Heaven's rule;
But he that doeth my great Father's will.
Many will say to me in that last day,
'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name,
And cast out devils, and done wondrous works?'
Then will I say to them, 'I knew you not:
Depart from me, ye that work wickedness.'
Therefore whoever heareth these my words,
And followeth, I will liken him unto
A sage, who built his house upon a rock:
The rains descended, and the strong floods came
And the winds blew and beat upon that house;
It fell not—it was founded on a rock.
And every one that scorneth these my sayings,
Shall be compared unto a foolish man,
Who built his habitation upon sand:
The rain descended, mighty floods involved,
The wild winds howled, and beat upon that house;
It fell—and dreadful was the fall thereof."
Thus Jesus taught the astonished multitudes:
Divine authority His doctrine marked,
Not given as mankind had ever preached.

Ere this His teachings had but blessed the few
Whom circumstances made associate;
And tho' miraculous, His deeds of grace
Remained the wonder of those needy souls
Honored, but bidden not to spread their fame.
Nor were His charges on that mount the first

To disconcert insidious Selfishness.
On entering the temple, where low greed
Had drawn contending traders, He alone
Drove them, as cattle that they bartered, forth;
Poured out the changers' money, overthrew
The tables, and to them that sold doves, said:
"Take these things hence; make not my Father's place
A house of merchandise." The Jews cried out:
"What sign showest Thou, seeing that Thou doest these things?"
Jesus replied to them: "Destroy this temple,
And I will raise it up within three days."
Then jeered the worldly: "Forty and six years
Were spent to build what Thou wouldst in three days."
But to His corporal structure He referred.
When therefore He was risen from the dead
His followers remembered, and observed
The meaning of those words, confirmed in faith.
Yet Christ committed not Himself to men,
And needed not that they should testify—
His kingdom being at hand—for He knew all.

Amongst the multitude that followed Him
Were many suffering the effects of sin.
Of these He cured whom perfect faith disposed
To those conditions which have puzzled since,
The healing ministers of every age.
When at Capernaum, so went renown,

There came a leader, who beseeched Him thus:
"Kind Lord, my servant lieth sick at home
With palsy." Jesus answered unto hope:
"I will attend and heal him." But to this,
The officer replied in humble tone:
"I am not worthy, Lord, that Thou shouldst come
Under my roof; but only speak the word,
And my poor servant shall be thus restored."
When Jesus heard, He marveled; and to those
About Him, witnessed: "Verily I say,
I have not found in Israel so great faith.
Many shall come from east and west, to share
With Abraham and Jacob, Heaven's high state:
But thence the weak ones of the realm, thro' Self,
Shall be cast out into oblivion dark:
There shall be sorrow and untold despair."
Then turning to the captain: "Go thy way;
And as thou hast believed, so be it done."
That very hour his servant was restored.
Christ urged the crowds thereafter to disperse:
But one, a scribe, approached, and fervent said:
"Master, I still will follow where thou goest."
Him Truth informed: "The foxes have retreats,
And even the birds their nests have; but the Son
Of man hath not a place to lay his head."
When, followed by disciples, Christ took rest
Upon a ship, the waves, by furies roused,
Swelled, foamed and dashed in force against the craft:
But Jesus slept; so His devout drew near,

And waking Him, cried : "Save us, Lord, we perish !"
He pitying gazed upon them, and replied :
" Why have ye fears, O men of little faith ?"
Then He arose—the winds and sea rebuked,
Obeyed Him ; and a sudden calm ensued.

After great acts of mercy, Jesus called
A man named Matthew, sitting in receipt
Of custom : he arose, and followed Him.
As Jesus sat at feast thereon, there came
And sat beside Him and the chosen band,
Many toll gatherers and wicked men.
Which when the Pharisees beheld, they said
To his disciples : " Tell us why your Chief
Eateth with publicans and sinners thus ?"
But Jesus, having heard, said unto them :
" They that be whole need not a doctor's help,
As do the sick. But go and learn what meaneth,
'I will have mercy, and not sacrifice:'
For I am not to call the righteous come,
But sinners to repentance."—
There approached
A certain ruler, who bent low, and said:
"My daughter even now is dead: but come
And lay Thy hand on her, and she shall live."
Christ gracious went with him; yet pressed by throngs,
A suffering woman, from behind found way,
And touched His garment's hem; believing thus,
If I but touch His robe, I shall be cured.

But Jesus turned to meet her sight and said:
"Daughter, be cheered; thy faith hath made thee whole."
She from that moment was restored to health.

When Jesus came into the ruler's house,
Where plaints of minstrels tuned the moan of friends,
He said to them: "Give place: she is not dead,
But sleepeth." And they laughed his words to scorn.
But when they were put forth, he entered meek,
And took her by the hand, and she arose.
Christ straitly charged each witness, that no man
Should hear of it; commanding them beside,
That something should be given her to eat.
The fame hereof, however, spread abroad
As when he led forth Lazarus from the tomb;
And so went rumor of the widow's son.
Two blind men, while He passed them, thus appealed:
"O Son of David, mercy deign to us!"
And Love, retiring with them, questioned thus:
"Believe ye I am able to do this?"
They answered: "Yea, Lord." Then He touched their eyes,
And said: "Be it according to your faith."
Their eyes were opened, and He charged them, saying:
"Let no man know it." But when they were gone,
They spread His fame thro' all the country round—
Consider, good philanthropists, the state

In which your Greater labored for mankind,
When even humane acts were liable,
To censure, ridicule, or enmity.
Think how He must have met profane restraint,
Eager to bless yet anxious to promote
A needy world—what occult truths our race
Missed then—spurned back upon Divinity!
For simplified essential themes were scoffed,
Without extraneous teachings, one of which
Would have aroused derisive ignorance
Against the whole, retarding man's reclaim.

Asked by a Pharisee to bless his board
The Gracious entered, and sat down to meat.
But scarce had holy converse been exchanged,
Before an erring woman of the town
Brought thither ointment in a gypsum box,
And bowed beside Him; weeping at His feet
She knelt to wash them with repentant tears,
And wiped them with her drooping folds of hair,
Anointing with the balm and kissing them.
Now when the Pharisee beheld, he judged
Within himself, 'This man, were he a seer,
Would have known who and what this woman is
That toucheth him; for she is foul with sin.'
And Jesus knowing, said unto his thought:
"Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee."
"Master, say on." The self-complacent spoke.
Then Truth: "There was a certain creditor

Who had two debtors ; and the first one owed
Five hundred pence, the other fifty pence.
And when they nothing had wherewith to pay,
He cordially forgave them both. Tell me,
Therefore, which one of them shall love him most?"
Simon made answer : "I suppose, that one
To whom he most forgave." And Christ replied :
"Thou hast judged rightly." Turning Mercy's look
Upon the woman, He to Simon said :
"Seest thou this woman? To thine house I came
Thou gavest me no water for my feet ;
But she hath washed them with her tears, and wiped
Them tenderly with bended head of hair.
Thou gavest me no kiss : but this poor thing
Hath, since she came, not ceased to kiss my feet.
My head with oil thou didst not think to anoint :
But she with ointment hath anoiled my feet.
Wherefore I say to thee, her many sins
Are all forgiven her ; for she loved much :
Who is forgiven little, loveth less."
And turning from the sceptic unto her,
He said : "Thy faith hath saved thee ; go in peace."

Great crowds from many cities thronging still,
To hear Him, thus by parable He taught
Fond multitudes that stood upon the shore :
"Behold, a husbandman went forth to sow ;
And as he sowed, some seeds fell by the way,
So that the fowls devoured them. Some grains fell

On stony places where earth gave no root ;
And thus they rootless withered in the sun.
Some fell among the thorns that choked their growth :
But other seeds fell into fertile ground,
And brought forth fruit, some even a hundred-fold.
Whoso hath ears to hear with let him hear."
Questioned of why he spoke in parables,
He answerd his disciples in this wise :
" Because it hath been given you to know
The mysteries of Heaven's government,
But unto them it hath not so been given.
Therefore I speak to them in parables :
Because they viewing see not, nor yet hear
Tho' listening, neither do they understand.
And in them is fulfilled the prophecy :
' Their hearts are gross, their ear to hearing dull,
And they have closed their eyes ; lest any time
They should behold, and hear, and combrehend,
And being converted, I should heal their wounds.
But blessed are your eyes, for they perceive ;
And blessed are your ears, because they hear.
For verily I say, that many seers
And righteous ones have yearned for what ye see,
And have not seen ; to hear those things ye hear,
Yet have not heard. Hence mark the parable.
Who heareth the Word, and understandeth not,
Alloweth the wicked one to enter in
And snatch away that sown within his heart—
Like unto seed upon the wayside cast.

Yet he that hath not root within himself,
But dureth for awhile, when malice tries
Is by and by offended at the Word,
And spurneth, as the stony place, Truth's seed.
That also which received the seed among
The thorns, is he that heareth Heaven's grace,
While worldly care, and riches, choke its place
And he becometh fruitless. But the one,
As good ground that received the seed to thrive,
Is he that heareth the Word and profiteth ;
Which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth
A hundredfold, or some in less amounts."
A second parable He uttered thus :
" Heaven's kingdom may be likened to a man
Who sowed good seed upon his field ; but while
Men slept, his enemy came stealthily
And sowed tares thro' the wheat, and stole away.
So when the blades sprung up, with fruitful tops,
There also, growing amidst, the tares appeared.
The planter's servants came to him and said :
'Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field ?
From whence, then, hath it tares ?' He answered straight :
'An enemy hath done this.' And they inquired :
'Then wilt thou that we go and gather them ?'
'Nay,' he enjoined, 'lest while ye weed out tares,
Ye root up also wheat with them. Let both
Together grow until the harvest time :
Then will I bid the reapers gather first

The tares, which, bound in bundles ye shall burn :
But gather the good grain into my barn.' "
Another parable Christ put forth, thus :
"The rule of Heaven is as a mustard seed,
Which a man chose, and planted in his field—
It is indeed the least of earthly seeds ;
But grown, it stands the greatest among herbs,
Becoming as a tree, so that the birds
Lodge safely in branches." Thus He preached
Thro' morals only to the multitude,
Knowing their powers, which had been foretold.

When He had sent the multitude away,
His nearest said: "Declare, Lord, unto us
Thy meaning in that instance of the tares."
Their patient Master thus interrupted:
"Who soweth the good seed is the Son of man;
The field—this world; the good seed represent
The children of the Kingdom; but the tares
Are self-willed children of the wicked one;
The enemy that sowed them is the devil;
The harvest is the end of worldly things;
My reapers are the angels. Yet attend—
The Realm is like a treasure hid in ground,
Which when a man hath found, he covereth,
Selling for joy thereof all that he hath,
To buy that field. Again, the promised Reign
Suggests a merchant, seeking goodly pearls:
Who, when he had found one of greatest price,

Sold all he owned and bought it.—Every scribe
Instructed of the Kingdom, likens one
Yielding from out his wealth things new and old."
The breath of Wisdom which astonished men,
Met little glory when returning thence,
Christ sought the place His earlier years had blest:
There envious triflers doubted and dispraised.
How well experience proveth His comment,
"A prophet is not without honor, save
In his own country, and in his own house!"
To them He showed not many mighty works
Because of their familiar unbelief.

The twelve apostles, Peter, Andrew, James,
John, Philip, Thomas, and Bartholomew,
Matthew, and James, (of Alpheus,) Thaddeus,
Simon the Canaanite, and Judas false—
Who afterwards betrayed his Lord for dross—
These bidden all went forth to help mankind,
Gifted as Truth vouchsafed, and taught by Love.
Yet eager for the Light divine that led,
They still attended Jesus, while great throngs
Followed on foot from cities far and near:
Since hearing of the brutal martyrdom
Of John the Baptist, not to tempt like crime,
Christ went for refuge to a desert place.
But when He saw the multitudes, whose needs
Exceeded their great number, and whose faith
Had led them thither, with compassion moved

He blest and healed their sick. Nor would His voice
Dismiss them hungry to their distant homes,
As night surrounding wrapped the ways in gloom.
All bidden sat upon the sward, to greet
A miracle that fed them: from five loaves,
Which Jesus blest, and broke, and gave to them,
The craving of as many thousand lives
Was pacified; for angels ministered
In joyful service of their Lord benign,
And brought from stores eternal that which filled
The famished multitude, whom plenty cheered.
Compliant, all creation's elements
Resolved as at inception to that Will,
Which sky, earth, waves upheld in dignity,
To shame the lagging loyalty of men.

Not less reproving Peter's dubious faith,
Than that of dogmatists, whose rights transgressed
The laws of God, and quibbled over marks,
Jesus employed each opportunity
To introduce great moral principles;
Lessening adjacent influence of that Imp
Now foremost in the battlefield of life.
Truth broke such weapons as false chiefs devised
For Satan's warfare—implements of creed
Designed to end all duties save to self.
He quoted prophesy describing some
As traitors to the Cause their lips acclaimed.
Then came His fond disciples, thus distressed:

"Knowest Thou that the devotional are shocked
By what Thou sayest?" But he answered them:
"That which my Father hath not planted here
Shall be uprooted." When the Pharisees
Desired that He should show a sign from Heaven,
He answered: "When the twilight glows, ye say,
'Fair weather cometh; for the sky is red.'
At ruddy morn, 'Foul weather threateneth;
Because the sky is red.' O hypocrites!
Ye can discern portents of the sky;
But can ye not read omens of the times?
A wicked generation would behold
Some token marvelous; yet not a sign
Shall it be given, but that verified."
And He departed from the slaves of doubt.
Thence warning His disciples to beware
Of doctrine that inflated men with pride,
He was again constrained to chide their want
Of faith and understanding in the Word.
Later He pictured trials yet to come;
How He must go before Jerusalem,
And suffer at the will of temporal powers,
And die, and on the third day, rise again.
Then Peter, worldly still, thus interposed:
"Not so, Lord. Thou shalt not be sacrificed."
Christ turning said: "Get thee behind me, Satan!
Thou art offensive unto me: for thou
Savorest not the things that be of God,
But those that are of men." And to them all:

"Who will come after me, let him deny
Himself, take up his cross, and follow me."
For whosoever strives but for his life
Shall lose it: whosoever loseth such
For me, shall find it in eternity.
What profit hath a man, if he shall gain
The whole world, and for this, lose his own soul?
What measure for his soul is fit exchange?
The Son of man, in glory of His Father,
Shall come with radiant angels, to reward
Each, every man according to his works.
Yea verily, I say unto you, there be
Some standing here, which will not taste of death,
Till they shall see Him coming with all power."

Persuasive by example as by speech,
Love, beaming mildly on the mortal strife,
Flooded humanity with light benign—
Discovered to the world that sympathy,
Whose sentients vibrate thro' the universe:
At first by Wisdom qualified in man
For peace, for happiness in others' good;
But which, had Selfishness not thus been curbed,
Would soon have been extinct, unknown on earth.
Where find we in the annals of our race
An instance, likening in moral pith
Christ's merciful delivery of the wretch
Arrested for adultery? She was brought
Before her Savior by the Pharisees,

Not that they might exalt Him, but to tempt
Some utterance whereupon they might accuse,
And drag Him thence to judgment and disgrace.
So they accused her: "Master, this vile wench
Was taken at adultery, in the act.
Now Moses in the law commanded us
To stone such even to death: but what sayest Thou?"
Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote
Upon the ground, as tho' He heard them not.
But when they questioned Him persistently,
He arose, and said: "He that is without sin
Among you, let him first cast stone at her."
Again He stooped, and wrote upon the ground.
And they that heard, convicted in their hearts,
Slunk one by one away, from the eldest down;
Till Jesus, with the culprit left alone,
Thus gently said unto her: "Women, where
Are thine accusers—hath no man condemned?"
She answered: "No man, Lord." And Jesus, mild:
"Neither do I condemn thee: go repent,
And sin no more." Discharged, she followed meek
The Spirit which redeemed and gave her hope.

Another time, that His disciples' strife
(Excited by the selfish Imp) should cease,
Christ honored artless children, blessing them
Not only by His sanctifying touch,
But with this welcome for their innocence:
"Suffer the little ones to come to me,

Forbid them not; for Heaven is of such.
Except ye be converted, and become
Harmless as this, disposed to kindly trust,
Ye shall not enter into heavenly state.
But whoso humbles, as this little child,
Himself before the Father shall be great
In Heaven's Kingdom. Whoso shall receive
One little life like this, receiveth me.
But whoso shall offend a little one
That trusts in me, it better were for him
That weighted he were drowned in deepest sea."
Thus teaching men the simple government
Of Heaven, Jesus deigned those natural truths
That only self-design misunderstood.
When Peter asked Him later, saying: "Lord,
How often shall my brother injure me,
And I forgive him? until seven times?"
Jesus replied to him: "Aye, seven times—
And until seventy times seven again.
And therefore is the kingdom of the blest
Likened unto a king, who took account
Of servants owing him. One appeared that owed
Ten thousand talents. But as he had not
The sum, his lord commanded he be sold
With wife and children and what else he had,
So payment might be made. The servant doomed,
Knelt, low, thus humbly pleading to his king:
'Lord, patience have; I yet will pay thee all.'
Then was the sovereign with compassion moved;

He loosed his servant and forgave the debt.
But that same debtor seized upon a man
Who owed him but a hundred pence; and scorned
His fellow's plea for patience, sending him
To prison, until he should pay the debt.
Friends sorrowing told the king what had been done,
Who summoned the unmerciful, and said:
'O wicked servant, I forgave thee all
Thy debt, as thou desiredst! Shouldst not thou
Have also had compassion on thy kind,
Even as I pitied thee?' Sternly the king
Delivered him to chastisement severe,
Till he should pay the full indebtedness.
So likewise shall my heavenly Father do
If ye forgive not each his brother's wrongs."
Clearly as Truth defined what constitutes
Divine condition in God's government;
Exalting by inviting man to join
At once that sphere of happiness, whose rule
Alone secures continuance of joy,
Thro' Love's grace blessing, actuating all;
Earth's millions personal in every aim
Strove, willing subjects of the evil one,
Nor guessed why peace was never known to them
The while they followed blind its enemy.
But when we contemplate the field since then,
How many, proud of gifts they prostitute,
Follow the scribes and Pharisees of old!
How few still comprehend the gracious Word!

Would men so struggle for the spoils of trade
If after winning they should be constrained,
As youthful virtue by the Savior was,
To part with wealth and give to those in need,
And thus gain treasures of a higher state?
Yet while it pleases mortals to bequeath
Rich luxuries for the narrow range of kin,
It more would bless the soul to emulate
God's bounty in that broad relationship,
Where wants and plain necessities appeal
To family affection. Gratitude
Proceeds from worthiness and not from waste.

To legal vanity, the Wisest spoke :
"A certain traveler was met by thieves
That stripped him of his raiment, wounded sore,
And then departed, leaving him half dead.
By chance there came a certain priest that way ;
Who, seeing the wounded man, avoided him.
A Levite also passing, looked upon
The fallen, and passed by on the other side.
But thither journeying, a Samaritan
Beheld him, and dismounted to relieve
His fellow. Kindly binding up the wounds,
And strengthening with wine, on his own beast
He brought the stranger to an inn, and nursed,
And paid for service, ere he went away,
Toward recovery ; promising return
For care bestowed upon the sufferer.

Which of these three, thinkest thou," the Savior asked,
"Was neighbor unto him that fell by thieves?"
The lawyer answered: "He that mercy showed."
Then Jesus, brief: "Go thou and do likewise."
Mercy had spoken to the world before,
In natural sentiments; but few, indeed.
Of millions gone, responded to the Will
Which now came manifest; that eye and ear
Might recognize the breathing Word in flesh.
O, sacred Organ of deliverence!
Harmonious Mouthpiece, whence Divinity
Deigned joyous chiming of eternal grace!
How well accordeth every course and sound
Associated thro' Thy presence here!
The very sparrows men so cheaply prized,
Hast Thou shown worthy of Divine concern—
The smallest things in the vast universe
As parts related, still pertain to Thee—
For Justice, Wisdom, Love considereth all.

To show the constancy of heavenly aid
Christ blessed and cured upon the sabbath day;
And when a ruler of the synagogue,
Like many a modern bigot of the cloth,
Received indignant this dogmatic breach,
He learned thus: "Hypocrite, doth not each one
Of you, upon the sabbath loose his beast
From stall, and lead him forth to watering?
And ought not one whom Satan long hath bound

Be loosed from evil on the sabbath day?"
These words His adversaries heard with shame,
Whereat the people were rejoiced, and spoke
Of all the glorious mercies that He wrought.
Yet nearer as the time of trial came,
While Love anticipated every pang
Prepared, no murmur passed those gracious lips;
But like the gentlest victim slain for greed,
The Lamb of God resigned to sacrifice,
Disposed to lift mankind from infamy,
And crush the power of Selfishness on earth,
Thus to His followers foretold events:
"Behold, we go up to Jerusalem;
And there the Son of man shall be betrayed
Unto the priests and scribes, who shall condemn,
Deliver to the Gentiles, mock, and scourge,
And crucify Him. He shall rise again,
Upon the third day, glorious over death."
They comprehended not their Master's speech,
Being unprepared for Wisdom; for their thoughts,
Tho' faith impressed, were individual still.
Therefore he counseled them on generous themes;
Of sovereign Justice, of their future state;
How their most worthy should administer—
The chiefest as a servant of them all.
He came not to be ministered unto,
But that His life might ransom many souls,
Submitted to redeem the thralls of sin.

BOOK XII.

No trumpet heralded the coming King,
No pomp infringed upon our Savior's way,
When entering Jerusalem He chose
The humblest means comporting with belief.
But as He rode, great numbers thronged around
To greet, and spread their garments in His path;
Others cut fragrant branches from the trees,
And strewed them in the way. With grateful praise
The multitudes that led and followed, sung:
"Blessed is He that cometh in the name
Of heaven's Lord—Son of our father David—
Hosanna in the highest!" Loud their chant,
Was borne before them on rejoicing airs;
The poorest joining in that song of hope.

Truth's guileless advent to Jerusalem
Moved wonder. Many questioned: "Who is this?"
And faithful thousands thundered in response:
"The prophet, Jesus Christ, of Nazareth!"
When some pretending reverence interposed:
"Master, rebuke thy followers." He replied:
"I tell you that, if these should hold their peace,
The very stones would suddenly cry out."
When near the city, He wept over it,
Saying: "If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day,

The things of worth, essential to thy peace!
But now the same are hidden from thine eyes.
The days shall come upon thee that thy foes
Shall cast a trench about thee, and surround
And hem thee in on every side, a prey
To be laid level even with the ground,
Thy children with thee; there shall not one stone
Be left upon another; because thou
Knewest not thy present opportunity."
Not fame alone made certain Greeks desire
To meet the countenance of heavenly Love:
Momentous destiny asserted all—
Men, states, the world felt, waited some great change.
Andrew and Philip when they apprised their Lord,
Were told: "The hour is come, wherein the Son
Of man should be exalted. Verily,
Except a grain of wheat fall into ground
And die, it is alone: but if it die,
It bringeth forth much fruit. The like is man.
Now is my spirit troubled—Father save
Me from this hour: but singly for this cause
Came I unto this hour. O, glorify
Thy name." Then came a voice from Heaven, which said:
I have thus glorified, and will again.
The people therefore that stood by and heard,
Said that it thundered: others were as sure
An angel spoke to Him. So Jesus said:
"That voice came not for me, but for your sakes.

Now is the judgment of this world involved!
Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.
And I, uplifted from the earth, will draw
All men unto me." His prophetic words
Were little understood by those addressed;
Whose sum, if matched with all the millions since
Ennobled by salvation, would but rate
With their appreciation of such grace.

On entering the lofty vault of prayer,
Christ drove them out that bought and sold therein,
And overthrew the money-changers' stands
Exclaiming, while the greedy fled His glance:
"Know, this house shall be held as one of prayer;
But ye have made it seem a den of thieves."
Henceforth restoring health to those with faith,
Or teaching those without, Christ came and went;
And when the elders and chief priests inquired
By what authority He did these works,
He answered: "I will also ask one thing
Of you, which if ye tell me, I likewise
Will tell by what authority I act.
Baptism from John, whence was it? grace from Heaven,
Or rite of men?" They reasoned with themselves:
"If we reply, 'From heaven;' He will ask,
'Why did ye not believe him then?' But if
We say, 'Of men;' we fear the people so;
For all hold John a prophet." Hence they owned:

"We cannot tell." And Jesus said to them:
"Nor tell I you by what authority
I do these things. But what think ye? A man
That had two sons, came to the first, and said:
'Son, go to-day and in my vineyard work.'
He answered, 'I will not,' but afterward
Repented and obeyed. The father called
And sent his second likewise; who replied,
'I go;' but went not. Whether of them twain
Sustained his father's will?" They cried: "The first."
When Jesus: "Verily I say to you,
That even publicans and harlots go
Before you into everlasting Life.
For John came unto you in righteousness,
And ye believed him not; but publicans
And harlots showed him faith; ye having seen,
Repented not, that him ye might believe.
But hear another parable: There lived
Who planted a good vineyard, hedged it round,
And placed a winepress in it, built a tower,
And leaving, let it out to husbandmen:
And when the time of fruit drew near, he sent
His servants to the tenants for its yield.
The hushandmen upon his servants fell,
And beat and killed them. So he sent again
More of his servants, who were likewise slain.
Now last of all he sent his son to them,
Considering 'They will reverence my son.'

But when the selfish tenants saw him near,
They said among themselves: 'This is the heir;
Come, let us kill him also, let us seize
On his inheritance.' They caught, and cast,
Him from the vineyard whom their envy slew.
When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh,
What will he do unto those husbandmen?"
All said: "He will destroy the wicked ones,
And let his vineyard out to other men,
Who seasonable fruits shall render him."
Truth: "Did ye never in the Scriptures read,
'The stone rejected by the builders, is
Become the topmost: this is Heaven's doing,
And it is marvelous before our eyes?'
Therefore I say to you, the sway of God
Taken from you, to others shall be given,
To a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."
The priests perceived that Jesus aimed at them,
But laid not hands on Him, because they feared
The masses who believed His words divine.

Ye dolts, who turn from blessings manifold
That God dispenses unto grateful zest!
Read, ponder on the parable of Christ;
Wherein a king, to his son's marriage feast
Invited subjects, who responded not,
But trifling went their customary ways,
To grasp and struggle in the lists of greed.
Or notice, tricksters, how the silly snare,

Arranged to trap the Savior of mankind,
Was made to serve a moral point instead,
As prudent His reply astonished thus:
"Give unto Cæsar what are Cæsar's things,
And unto God the things that are God's." So
While separating covetous designs
From the great principles promoting all,
Truth wounded but where wickedness opposed;
The weak being championed as the strong restrained.
Thus penetrated, every sinful mind
Turned in dismay from Jesus; neither durst
Men question Him of right from that time forth.
Again were selfish miscreants, who preyed
Upon faith, folly, misery, or hope,
Denounced and arch hypocrisies exposed,
Christ summing up the law, when challenged, thus:
"Love God with all thy heart and mind and soul;
To effect which, love thy neighbor as thyself.
On these hang all commandments and all law."

That common tendency to estimate
By money measure charitable deeds,
Met with rebuke, which held the widow's mite
More worthy than those greater tributes drawn
From proud abundance ; showing that good acts
Derive their richest value from the heart.
Fitly condemning mercenery thought,
And passion for insignia of decay,
By figure Christ foretold the fall of pride.

Yet those who only heard the Temple doomed,
Were not more vulgar then our modern knaves
Who rear vast insults in the name of God,
Above a suffering people, and pretend
To glorify by enslaving faithfulness.
Earth's Sovereign washed the feet of those beloved;
And tho' a traitor in their number stood,
Conducted not between them, when he said:
"Know ye what I have done to you, aright?
Ye call me Master, Lord—and ye say well;
For so I am. If then your Lord and Master,
Have washed your feet, ye also ought to tend
And humbly serve each other. I have shown,
That ye should do as I have done to you.
The servant is not greater than his lord;
Nor is one bidden greater than he that sent.
Knowing such, ye shall be happy so to do.
I speak not of you all—I know my chosen—
But that the written Word may be fulfilled;
He eateth bread with me that hath designed
Against me. This I tell before it come,
That afterwards ye may believe in me.
I say unto you, he that receiveth whom
I send, receiveth me; and who receiveth
The Son, receiveth Him that sent me here."
Love paused compassionate ere concluding thus:
"One of you, verily, shall me betray."
Then the disciples on each other looked,
Doubting of whom he spoke. One dear to Christ

Was leaning on his bosom. Peter signed,
That he should ask who was to be so false.
In blest embrace he asked: "Who is it, Lord?"
Truth signified by action indirect,
And thus to infamy in Judas spoke:
"Do quickly that thou doest." But none there
Knew for what reason He said this unto him;
Some thinking Judas was sent out to buy,
Or give unto the poor from money held;
For straightway he went out—and it was night.
Therefore, when he was gone, the Savior said:
"Now shall the Son of man be glorified,
And God is glorified in Him—as One.
My children, yet a little while I am
With you. And ye shall seek me, as I said,
But whither I shall go, ye cannot come.
A new commandment I give unto you.
'That ye love one another,' even as
I have loved you, let constant Love conjoin.
By this shall all men know that ye are mine,
If ye love one one another." Peter asked:
"Lord, whither goest thou?" His answer being:
"Whither I go, thou canst not follow now;
But thou shalt follow afterward." The last
Moved Peter's fervent nature thus to speech:
"Lord, why can I not follow Thee at once?
I will lay down my life for Thy dear sake."
But the divine lips answered, knowing all:
"Wilt thou for love of me submit thy life?

I verily say unto thee, The cock
Shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice."
O, Contemplation of ungrateful life!
What lesson dost Thou manifest to souls
Deserted in their ordeals of need,
When true devotion, tho' espoused to good,
Denied by men, its greatest trial meets!
If but this one Exemplar graced poor earth,
The Ideal of nobility were ours,
Unto Whose majesty no intellect
Could conjure likeness uninspired by Heaven.
Can voluntary virtue—whose advance
Was Love's sole deference, which pleadeth yet
For those conditions Justice specifies—
Can patience, goodness, resolution, need
A constant and sustaining monument
When weakness or ingratitude deny
To worthy spirit its immediate hope,
While such endurance in our Model stands,
Forever strengthening finite sufferance?

Millions attesting this reflection, bless
The present with celestial intercourse;
From saintly mothers, kind, devoted, brave,
And lesser martyrs further back in time,
To the apostles, who themselves endured
Not only persecution, but thro' years
Of weary trial cherished the infant Creed
With care maternal, wasting for its strength.

But Christ had given them in sacrament
Substantial comfort of His flesh and blood;
For as the Fountain of eternal Life
Exerted even thro' material forms,
These members were united in one Being.

Thence followed to Gethsemane by all
Save Judas, sadly Jesus took His way,
And saith to the disciples: "Sit ye here,
While I pray yonder." Peter and the sons
Of Zebedee went further on, to whom
The Savior said: "My soul is sorrowful,
Even unto death: wait here, and watch with me."
A few steps taken, He cast Himself to earth
Upon His face, thus praying: "O my Father,
If it be possible, let this cup pass
From me! yet, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."
He cometh to those near, and findeth them
Asleep, then speaketh unto Peter thus:
"What, could ye not watch with me one short hour?
Watch, pray, that ye enter not into temptation.
The spirit true is willing, but the flesh
Is weak." A second time He went and prayed:
"O Father, if this cup pass not away,
Except I drain it, let Thy will be done."
He came and found them heavy-eyed again;
So turned a third time to His agony.
At length, the oppressed were wakened by these
words:

"Behold, the hour approacheth, and the Son
Of man unto the sinners is betrayed.
Rise, let us forth: behold, he is at hand
That doth betray me." And while yet He spoke,
Lo, Judas came! behind him pressed a mob
With swords and staves, as bidden by the priests.
Judas advanced to Jesus with a kiss—
The traitor's sign agreed on to betray
Resistless Love, and thus accosted Him:
"Hail, Master!" Jesus calm for all inquired:
"Friend, wherefore art thou come?" The mob unawed
Rushed forward and upon Him laid rude hands.
Now one of His disciples drew a sword,
And smote who foremost in the rabble moved;
But Jesus interposed: "Put up thy sword,
For they that take the like shall perish by it.
Thinkest thou I cannot to my Father call,
And He sends hosts of angels presently?
But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled,
That thus it must be?" Turning to the throng,
Which clamorous hemmed Him round, the meek One said:
"Are ye come out against a thief, with swords
And staves to take me? Daily have I sat
With you in the Temple teaching, and ye laid
No hold on me. But all this hath been done,
That the prophetic Word be manifest."
Then those so near deserted Him, and fled;

The howling captors leading Him away
To Caiaphas, their high priest, where the scribes
And elders were assembled. Peter drawn
By sympathy—that universal thrill
Affecting all reponsive to the Source—
Still followed at a distance unobserved,
And went into the palace, mingling there
With servants, resolute to see the end.

A bigot council sought false witnesses,
So Jesus might be shown to merit death;
But no such testimony could be found,
Tho' finally, two, falser than the rest,
Thus testified: "This Person, preaching, said,
'I am able even God's temple to destroy,
And in three days to raise it up again.'"
The priest arose, and questioned Jesus thus:
"Answerest Thou nothing? what is it that these
Witness against Thee? Jesus still held peace.
At which the high priest violent exclaimed:
"I abjure Thee by the living God, to tell
Whether Thou be the Christ, or Son of God!"
And Jesus answered softly: "Thou hast said.
Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man,
Enthroned with power, and coming in the clouds."
Then Caiaphas rent his robe, and wrathful said:
"He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need
Have we of witnesses? ye have heard His schism.
What think ye?" All replied: "He merits death."

While answering, they spat upon and struck
The silent Victim; some deriding thus:
"Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who smote?"

Now Peter sat without, distressed at heart:
Anon a damsel coming to him, charged:
"Thou also wast with Jesus." But this truth,
Before the others there, he thus denied:
"I know not what thou sayest." He went out
Into the porch, and yet another said
To friends beside: "This fellow also was
With Jesus." Peter by an oath exclaimed:
"I do not know the man." Those listening,
Considered, then came unto him, and said:
"Thou art surely false—thy speech betrayeth thee."
He cursed and swaggered: "I know not the man."
Immediately the cock crew. Peter now
Remembered what his Master had foretold
Of three denials before the cock should crow.
Touched, he went forth and wept most bitterly.

When morning came, the priests and elders planned
Against the Life they feared: Jesus was bound
And by them hurried to the judgment hall
Of Pontius Pilate, governing; who said:
"What accusation bring ye against this man?"
They quibbled: "If He were not criminal,
We would not have delivered him to thee."
Others cried out: "We found the Miscreant

Perverting thousands, and prohibiting
Our tribute unto Cæsar, even saying,
That He Himself is Christ, forsooth, a king."
And Pilate asked: "Art Thou King of the Jews?"
The Sufferer only answered him: "Thou sayest."
Then Pilate to the priests and people spoke:
"I find no fault in this man." Yet more fierce,
They charged: "He stirreth up the populace,
Teaching from Galilee unto this place."
When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked
At once if Jesus were a Galilean;
For Herod—in Jerusalem at the time,
As favored by the libertine of Rome—
Would so have jurisdiction. Thereupon
The Arraigned was sent to Herod, Pilate loth
To vex the rabble by releasing Christ.
But Herod merely mocked the silent One,
And sent Him back, arrayed in gorgeous robe.
Pilate, more dignified, thus scored the priests:
"Ye have brought this man again to me, accused
Of turning people false; and I, behold,
Having examined well, have found no fault
In Him that touches on the charges made—
No, nor yet Herod—for I sent you hence,
And nothing hath appeared deserving death.
I therefore will chastise and set Him free."
(Custom released some culprit at the feast.)
The mob, in chorus, roared: "Away with Him!
Release Barabbas unto us." (The same

For murder and sedition was confined.)
Defending Jesus, Pilate spoke unheard ;
Crowds crying : "Crucify Him, crucify !"
Again authority protested thus :
"What evil hath He done? I find no cause
For death in Him : chastisement will suffice."
But they were loud and instant in their shouts,
Requiring that He should be crucified :
The priests' demands and bigot claims prevailed—
Pilate reluctant yielded to their will.
Cleansing his hands before the rabid throng,
He thus addressed them : "I am innocent
Of this just Person's blood ! see ye to it."
The tumult deepened in their hoarse reply :
"His blood on us and on our children be."
So Pilate freed Barabbas unto them,
And after scourging Christ, delivered Him
Into the hands of soldiers, who, for sport,
Took Jesus out into the common hall,
Where, gathering round, they stripped Him to put on
A scarlet robe. A crown of platted thorns
Was pressed upon His head—the blessed hand
Was made to hold a reed ; while in this plight,
They bent the knee before Him, and thus mocked :
"Hail, King of the Jews !" Then spat upon and struck;
In silence Jesus was exposed once more
To vulgar glances and indecent jests,
Before His former raiment was restored,

And thence they led Him to be crucified.
O Lamb of God—O Martyr infinite—
If human sacrifice apart from Thine
Were all cast up, how little would it seem
Beside Divine submission unto man!
Yet what less mighty could regenerate earth,
And master the satanic influence
That broke a unity of kindred souls,
Burst concrete brotherhood, disjoined a race,
And made contending members of mankind?
Lo, even Thy superhuman sufferance,
Sublime in meekness, meeting all to bless,
Tho' saving myriads and ennobling flesh,
Scorned by the egotistic since and now,
Marks Selfishness a dreadful enemy.—
His brutal drivers, lest their Victim fail
Beneath the crushing burdens of His cross,
Compelled one Simon, a Cyrenian
They met, to bear the instrument of death.

There followed crowds, of whom the women wept;
But Jesus calmly turning, said to them:
"Nay, daughters of Jerusalem, weep not
For me, but for your children and yourselves.
Behold, the days approach when they shall say,
'Blessed are the barren—wombs that never bare,
And paps that never suckled. Fall on us,
Ye mountains—cover us, O pitying hills!'
For if they do these things in a green tree,

What shall be done hereafter in the dry?"
His passion thus of Mercy's struggle breathed,
Advancing on the moral of all time.

Two malefactors doomed alike were led
With Jesus, to be put to death. A steep
Called Calvary was reached; and there they stripped
And crucified Him, with the criminals
On either side suspended. Then was heard
That prayer Divine, superior to earth,
Redemption's utterance in the sovereign Word:
"Forgive them, for they know not what they do."
Dull wretches passing by reviled Him thus:
"Ah, Master of the Temple! If thou be
The Son of God, come down from off thy cross."
Likewise the scribes and chief priests mocking said:
"He saved a flock; himself he cannot save.
If he be King of Israel, let him come
Down from the cross, that seeing we may believe.
He trusted God; let Him deliver now,
If He desire, who claimed to be His Son."
These senseless gibers little knew, indeed,
What visage infamy presented then,
Much less to appreciate that heavenly phrase
Which shamed a world's incessant platitude.
The groveling number fought among themselves
While casting lots for pieces of His robe;
Yet knew not why, unless some furtive good
Might still result thro' One they crucified.

Such is the contradiction of gross minds—
In secret awed by what low pride assails.
Their superscription over Christ displayed,
'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.'
An accusation deemed satirical,
And truly so, considering their course.

Now followed darkening hours. The sun was hid;
As loth to look upon that woful scene.
Earth shuddered—from her bosom heaved the dead,
To their first resurrection. For at last
Flesh parting from the Spirit, cried aloud:
"My Godhead, why hast Thou deserted me?"
Vibrating organs scarce had lapsed to peace
Before the Temple's vail was rent in twain.
The rumbling ground convulsive burst its rocks,
And vaguest horrors crowded in the gloom.
Fear wrought upon the violent—dismayed
They owned: "This truly was the Son of God."
With aching sorrow, when denied approach,
True womanhood at distance wept, and watched
The sacred figure of their Savior still,
While evening's sky upon the extended form
Seemed folding its black draping like a pall.
A counselor, named Joseph, wise and just,
Obtained the right from Pilot to remove
Christ's body. Hands as gentle as devout,
Enswathed the lifeless frame in line nshroud,
And laid it in a rock-hewn sepulchre

Where never form had rested; then they rolled
A massive stone against the opening.

But meanwhile Love, relieved of burden here,
Passed manifest in Spirit thro' those realms,
Where shame, remorse, discredit, or neglect
Restrained blind myriads, long freed from earth.
Nor scorned the wretched hosts more obdurate.
As victims of infirmities conceal
From sight, or from compassion, their distress,
These self-afflicted numbers sought to hide
Their agonies, that raged within—themselves
Infuriate furnaces of hate-fanned wrath.
But Love's great sacrifice confronted all—
Christ's gracious course was omnipresent now;
Thro' farthest boundaries of doubt and guilt
The Presence moved. No fleeting consciousness
Could hope to shun that Evidence sublime
Of bounteous Will to all creation shown.
Or midst vacuity, the chosen sphere
Of millions given faculties in vain,
Allied to darkness, now their incubus;
Or whither turbulence involved wild hosts
In vortex furious as profitless;
Or onward where impediment surrounds
Above, below, at every point its sprites;
Throughout which quivering void that pulsed upon
Unnumbered shades distraught; to where sad wraiths
Remotest bided, Heaven's Vision passed;

And blest forever by that transit bright,
For being conciliate, the spectral depths.
As genius since, above dark ocean borne,
Glanced calmly on deep moaning ranks of waves
Tossing beneath dense clouds that overhead
Swift crowding massed and shut out heaven from view,
While low distrust and menace muttered near,
So Love reflective moved upon that sea
Of deeper woes that surging far below
Heaved conscious billows uppermost to meet
The Light divine, and brighten in review
Before they murmuring sank to partial peace.
So spirits dark, yet of less gravity,
That long had waited this supreme event,
Like vapory masses hung above the scene,
Kindling as floating beauties of the dusk,
With Glory's rays, refulgent ere the swept
Imposing thro' the infinite beyond.

O millions! summoned from unfathomed deeps
To flutter, as might startled wings unseen
Thro' sombre night, or like the rush of winds
From hidden distances, to meet as one—
What grateful flurry stirred your numbers then,
Where space and time were requisite to range
For that most glorious entry into Heaven
Of legions blest, of hosts anticipant,
When Love's ascension would to welcome cleave
The shining portals of eternity!

Intense as expectation rose the while,
Fruition (unlike realizing here)
Must soon enhance those ecstacies presumed;
Yet of that indescribable array,
No single spirit, self-characterized,
Awaited Glory, but as one in Being
They glowed incorporate with His desire.

Day shone again; and Pilate was beset
By fierce fanatics who required a guard
To watch the tomb of Jesus as they said,
Lest His disciples secretly dispose,
And preach the Resurrection prophesied.
Scorn urged their ruler to command them thus:
"Ye have a watch: go, make the place secure
As ye see fit." They confidently sealed
The stone that closed Christ's sepulchre, and placed
A guard of their own number there to watch.
Vain mortals! As if spiritual Life
Which moved the universe could thus be checked—
Essential Principle, blent even in man,
Making him master of material forms.
A like ridiculous conceit is shown
By lettered scorners of what still transcends
Their understanding. Met by subtle facts
Of phychologic presence and effect,
They dodge an actual contest where their power
Must stand exposed, a jest for Mystery.
But cunning pride of judgment, tho' restrained,

Prattles with mimic gravity thereon,
Perhaps amusing Heaven, as we find
Precocious mites divert superiors here.
A speck that apprehends the vast Unknown,
At once is trifling and outstrips those orbs
Conjectured in obscurity—denies
An entity its scheme establishes;
Clings to a purpose that it will not own,
And weaves and wears a snare of paradox.
As possibly might human skill detect
Birth's secret flight thro' fibrous labyrinths,
Which blindness frequently essays to mark
While serving error foists its frantic terms,
As vigilance profane arrest or see
Love's glorious resurrection over death.
Gross vision dazzled by supernal Light
That overpowered and left them motionless,
Prompted the sentinels to thus report:
"Behold, an angel of the Lord came down,
With countenance of lightning: we in fear
Shook even as the earth, and fell as dead."
But this they contradicted; bribed by those
Who trembled for their ministry, and hoped—
O, vanity, to banish from the world
That last great element of hope for man,
Arising faith in Jesus typified.

The past—a night of storms for men—must yield
Before Redemption, pouring over earth

Fraternal warmth. The radiant Dawn of grace
In splendor beamed upon creation now
To unify man's fellowship with God.
Such glorious Day had promise on the world
To inspirit virtue with aspiring growth,
That settled gloom of doubt long holding place
Over humanity, like evil mists,
Would soon give way to Influence from above.
The primal order of creation seemed
Simply prophetic to this second call
For incorporeal Light, far streaming forth
To minister a greater Life throughout.
Not only planet system was involved—
Our Sun diffused unfailing grace beyond
The brilliant field of matter; in His scope
Affecting all till time shall be no more.
Creation hath no pause. But virtual Birth
Regenerate in Christ hereon took place—
The true Beginning of Humanity.

What faith was first elated to behold
Victorious Love's survival and return?
Whose vision first bore witness of the Word
Reanimate on earth? The gentle eyes
That weeping watched His torture unto death,
And followed to the tomb with constancy
That only woman knows the fervor of—
Maternal one, the other Mary bowed
With burden of contrition—both approached

His tomb at dawn, the Sabbath being fulfilled,
And as the first day of the week began,
By heavenly agent thus were flashed upon:
Fear not: I know ye seek the Crucified.
He is not here, but risen from the dead,
As pledged, He goeth into Galilee;
There ye shall see Him: lo, I have told you.
They hastened from the sepulchre, disturbed
To have sought the Living One among the dead;
Yet joy at faith's awakening returned
And quickened the disciples with new hope.
Morn's golden beams outshining, they beheld
Their Savior's countenance whose splendors streamed
Athwart them. At His lustrous feet they fell
And worshiped, while Love mildly counseled thus:
Remind my brethren that in Galilee
I shall appear to them. The two obeyed;
But found His sad disciples deep in doubt,
Anxious for proof more tangible than words
To banish their despondeney. Yet faith
Of woman led, infused devotion's band;
And when amidst their number Christ appeared,
Prepared, no fear assailed them—joy instead
Sustained each startled but revering sense.

His spiritual mission entertained
The means of Inspiration soon to come,
Which must ingratiate with gracious power
That chosen following of humble men

Destined to bear the insignia af Truth,
Reflecting mercy, peace and hope abroad.—
What had the gifted of past centuries wrought
For common weal, for permanence of good?
Lycurgus brutalized the Spartan mind,
And Solon but a season's respite brought.
The mighty figures of earth's greatest bard
Proved giant leaders of Achæan wrath—
Fed Dorian ferocity and greed.
Epaminondas was endowed in vain.
Pythagoras and Thales failed to cheer
Their own reflections thro' declining life.
Refining Pericles died unassured;
While Athens' blossoms, leaf and stem, were torn
By her rude sister-state in jealousy.
Socrates checked not Alcibiades,
His brilliant pupil, whom satanic pride
Urged against Syracuse on wildest scheme—
A traitor, spite of lofty principles
Espoused without their purpose paramount.
Nor better served, that thunderer of thought,
Demosthenes, to hinder Philip's crimes,
Than Aristotle to exalt the son
Who, inflamed with lust, ere noon of life had curst
And conquered half the world; yet, vain as youth,
Branded a score of cities with his name.
He taxed not divination, but was frank,
When questioned of succession, to reply:
"Let him that is the strongest rule—I fear

My obsequies will redden many hands."
How terribly the phrase was verified !
Assassination, treachery, revenge
Increase until, like propagating fiends,
On souls of men they fasten hellish claims,
Retributive, unsatisfiable,
Tho' involving the destruction of all things.
Availed it that fraternal league began
To light up dying Hellas? Fever-like,
It flushed her features with unreal life
Before the mortal struggle—as the blush
Of fair consumptive deeming death remote.
Left Tullius what converted Tarquin's brood?
Held Cassius that which made the right secure?
Stolo and Sextius, common champions,
But stung the selfish to redoubled rage.
The curse of class defied all schemes of state:
Unfollowed Cincinnatus passed from sight.
The blood of Manlius begrimed the rock
Down which he hurled his country's foes in vain.
Alas, such vengeful malice scourged this age,
Hope fled an exile from despairing Earth.
That oath of life-long hatred to a race
By which the father bound his gifted son,
Made Hannibal a butcher of his kind,
And showed what evil spirit swayed the times.
Cornelia's noble sons confronted wrong ;
But banded cowardice crushed out their lives,
And made their memory odious to the throng

For whom they suffered —for whose rights they died.
By villain art these victims were made seem
Not martyrs but seditious demagogues';
Hence the dull masses, like some modern droves,
Turned from defense that hedged their liberty.
Self-interest was the single creed of man:
From legislator down to criminal
Less choice in covering dishonest means;
Theft, bribery, falsehood, scorn of public good,
Trained Satan's treacherous saturnalia.
Jugurtha, after murdering his own,
And seizing the Numidian throne, with bribes
Turned back Rome's generals sent to punish him.
Even Mithridates, learned to no end,
With savage impulse slaughtered multitudes,
But failing of his selfish purpose, fell
By his own will, an object of despair.
Sought Marius glory for himself or Rome?
Bright burst his genius from obscurity,
Emitting actual flame; but only such
As proved Rome's most destructive element.
Crowned with all honors, knowledge and old age
Only resolved a more revengeful fiend,
Who, sunk in low debauchery, expired—
'Abhorred by foes, feared even by his friends.'
His rival, Sylla, on assuming power,
Yet subject to the same mad influence,
Proscribed whole thousands daily for revenge,
And, arrogant as merciless, laid claim

To title so preposterous, its sound
Shamed him into retirement, where disease
Wasted away from sight his loathsome form.
The eloquence of Cicero was ignored
By more than Catiline : patrician pride,
That first applauded its great orator,
Soon after sacrificed him; not for crime,
But that three selfish rogues, who sent to death
Three hundred senators and two thousand knights,
Might glut on vengeance and spread terror round
To demonstrate the heathen creed of force.
And what came from the first triumvirate,
Wherin united Prestige, Craft and Wealth?
Civil convulsions ; so exhausting Rome,
She suffered ravishment of her sole charm
Without a protest, until counter-lust
Destroyed her daring master. In his fall,
Despite high protest, nothing moral lurked,
Except that—Brutus proved a pagan friend.
The stoic Cato found his plan at fault ;
Yet not more futile than his neighbor's schemes :
Weak Antony for Egypt's regal jade
Divorced himself of fair Octavia,
Whose lordly brother, both for personal rage
And military power, at Actium
Defeated frailty, but degraded Rome—
The hope of earth—into a despotism.
As if the pompous title given then
Would answer for integrity of state

Submitted in Augustus! Rights denied
So long in value, were not now regrets;
Men, twisted in the toils of self, forgot
The general design; and mutual aim
Was out of reason for a race distraught.
Augustus, tho', by usurpation rose
Against the ultimate: as Heaven decreed
A mightier Advent than his rule presaged.
The graceful elm that flourished in this reign
Whose beauty pleaseth yet, and other growths
Developing amidst, upon decay,
Tho' deathless gave no life. While fostering
These flowery hopes, their patron's boast pronounced
His hopeless dulness as to genuine good,
By vainly pointing to the marble sites
Where he had found but rookeries of brick.
Quite characteristic of that sordid class
Pressing in heartless warfare over life:
When pride suggests some public course, they claim
By cold material splendor to achieve
What they have always battled to subvert.
With venal insult they engage renown,
And think to compensate humanity
With stolid monuments, the only forms
To which their own idolatry has bent.

But now the brute Tiberius had assumed
The purple—ominous indeed of blood—
For after poisoning his bravest kin,

And deputizing tyranny, that isle
To which vice led his indolent desires,
Debarred not jealous wrath from following soon.
His treacherous minister was sent to death
Not for those infamies against the mass
That made Rome shudder, but because he dared
Attempt the unit's title to control.—
Forbid me, Truth, the barbarous details
Of this grim monster's dark malevolence ;
When whisper from unscrupulous tongues was doom,
And vicious rule o'er virtuous alarm
Shook gory horrors of triumphant hate.
Beyond this centre of Satanic force,
An Orient of enfeebling heresy,
A South where human in brute nature merged,
And elsewhere savage hordes, presented Earth,
With dreadest aspect she had ever worn.
The demon of destruction was abroad,
Leading, inflaming, sacrificing all !
But power infernal was to know defeat,
At last impossible except thro' Love,
And sovereign Inspiration deigned direct.
Past trial had shown the weakness of mankind,
The proudest of whose promises had fallen
When Heaven vouchsafed our Rescue.
Sophist praise
Of empire subsequent, to sanction wrong
In later government, may captivate
The superficial ; but empiric pride,

However lauded, signifies decay :
Still such was Earth's condition when espoused,
Deliverance bordered the miraculous.
No principle preposterous for the age
Was urged upon it. Tidings of great joy
To valued souls, requiring more the grace
Of peace, compassion and good will, than claims
Irrelevant that in their turn were deigned,
Heralded Wisdom. Clearly so the Word :
" Whoever shall not as a little child
Receive God's kingdom entereth not therein."
Such faith in Love, obedience to which
Secureth peace and happiness at once—
Child-reverence for the Father's boundless means,
Content, and unaffected gratitude,
Were first essential to the hope of man.
Nor less peculiar hath the same come down ;
For only lives as natural, pure, sincere
And harmless as those innocents whose trust
Is the best claimant of our love and care,
Can fully realize that happiness
Divinely meant for all. A charm descends
From Justice to the humblest consciousness,
Engaging what its compliment repays ;
Winning consideration to itself,
With confidence which predisposes good
To approve reliance of simplicity—
Fond, suave and chaste; till artifice infects
The prime and universal purity.

That very choice, ingenuous and new
From all the crushing agencies on earth,
That plain selection of an humble band,
Instead of schooled adherents proud of lore,
Impertinent, tho' lofty and in vogue,
Expressed as much consistency as power.
For while the enemy may be made serve
(As Rome's preponderance diluted then,)
Some general purposes of Heaven, the right
Is manifested most where loyalty
Devoted wholly yields its ardent will
And noble aspiration up to God.
This is indeed the entering upon
His kingdom, which is evermore to bless,
Assuage and harmonize creation's state,
Made integral; and hence, to stand opposed
To adverse spirit, be it weak or strong.

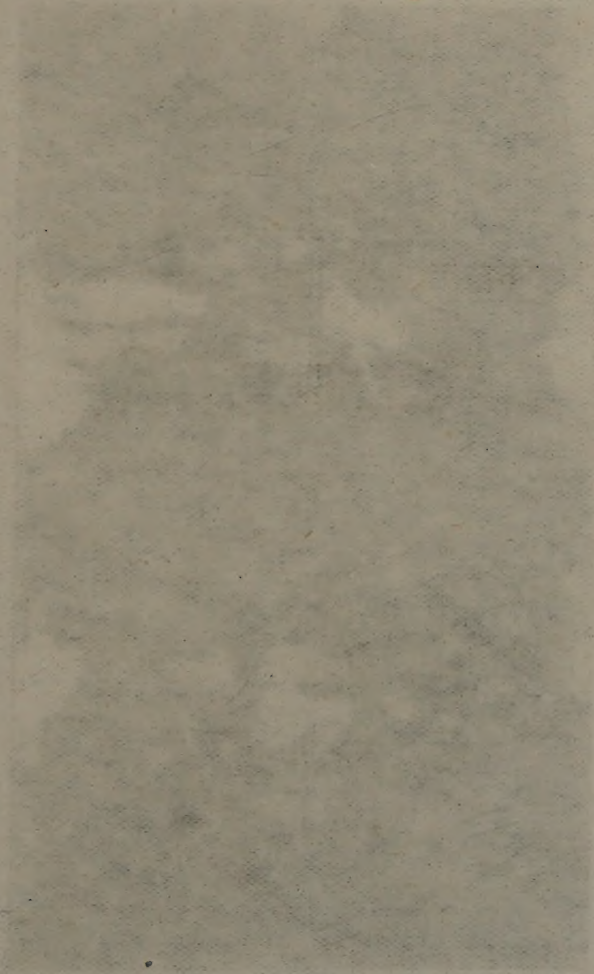
Behold the number drawn to subjugate
A world—antagonized by infamies
Scarce equaled in the sum of all mankind!
But with them Victory already moved
Benign, yet constant, mild, but resolute.
Their souls received His potence with the charge:
"All power is given me in heaven and earth.
Go, therefore, teach all men, baptizing them
In faith of Father, Son and Holy Ghost:
Teaching them to observe whatsoever things
I have commanded you: and lo, I am

Forever with you, even to the end."
First, last enjoined to strengthen, not to crush,
The spirit of humanity—to teach
That filial tie endearing man to God,
And actual brotherhood throughout the race,
Which sublime motive every good involves,
Defined how primary instruction was,
And is, and ever must be, to exalt
Degraded natures, and enlighten souls
Astray in darkness; thence to cultivate
Those innate but perverted sentiments
Shared universally—concerning tribes
Unknown and savage, yet accessible.

Distinct from lights illusory or vain
Which lured old sages and deflected youth,
Fell clearer beams of Mercy mild and true
Upon the lowly; germinating hope,
That never else had flourished over earth.
Castes, theories, customs, founded and upheld
By Satan's myrmidons, submitted to
By suffering millions captive and enslaved,
Turned now objective evils before Truth.
Brute force remanded was to bend again
Obedient under spiritual rule;
Which, though attacked and checked by fury blind,
Would lead at length to peace approaching Heaven.
The Issue was assured. If centuries
Of wild resistance on the future hung,

Like storm-involving clouds, their thunders, fires,
Must in the end exhausted pass away
And leave all peaceful in the light of Love.

The End.



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